TEN CENTS A COPY

The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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An Epistle to the Americans

LITERATURE AND DIALECTIAL MATERIALISM. By John Strachey. New York: Covici-Friede. 1934. $1.

Reviewed by IRWIN EDMAN

ST. PAUL, the pious reader scarcely needs to be reminded, was wont to address Epistles to his brothers and sisters in Christ gathered together in congregations more or less faithful and more or less insecure in Corinth, in Ephesus, and in Rome. He would exhort them to greater efforts in the faith, reprove their backslidings, and expound to them the principles on which their faith was grounded. These epistles of Paul's through a combination of circumstances familiar to historians of the Early Church became the foundations of Christian theology.

Mr. Strachey has here written an Epistle to the Marxians, especially those faithful gathered together in America. Strictly speaking, one gathers from the slim text that this pamphlet was a lecture. But so as a matter of fact were some of Paul's Epistles. And just as Paul, as occasion demanded, treated marriage, second marriage, or the breaking of bread with the uncircumcized, so the Apostle Strachey in this Epistle treats the theme of literature. For many of the faithful have of late been troubled on that score, and some outside the true Marxist faith have been saying things that might undermine the true believers. These latter are told in so many words what literature is like and what it is for today just as Paul—the analogy grows on one—told the Thessalonians and the Corinthians how to live until the Second Coming:

> The writers and artists who are on the side of the working class [writes Mr. Strachey] will of necessity, during the revolutionary period, find that they have to forge of their art a sharp sword for use in the struggle which they cannot avoid. It will be only after the triumph of the workers that their work can become less concerned with pressing and desperate social issues.
>
> These are vast tasks, and in order to accomplish them we ["we" refers to the Marxians of whom the audience addressed was apparently exclusively composed] need the very highest standard of self criticism. Only so may revolutionary writers and artists create comprehensive and adequate images with which to make articulate the issues of the bitter struggle in which we live.

Thus does Apostle Strachey salute in conclusion the dear brothers in Marx.

Now one who finds a little difficulty in reading Mr. Strachey's brochure as one of the faithful, is compelled to treat it as a contemporary philosopher or a pagan philosopher, bred in the tradition of Greek and Roman letters, might treat the Epistles of Paul. If one is not to accept the document as a piece of theological exhortation, on the primary points of which one reverently accepts the same conclusions as the author, one must treat the contribution on its own account as an analysis of the problem with which it deals. Mr. Strachey is dealing with literature in our own day. But instead of trying to see objectively what contribution or confusion dialectical materialism makes to the understanding of it, he is really asking the question, What does or should literature mean to us as dialectic materialists? What he finds is that "contemporary writers are a part of existing civilization; existing civilization is a bourgeois

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THE LANDING OF CAPTAIN COOK IN BOTANY BAY
Painting by E. Phillips Fox, from "A History of Exploration" by Sir Percy Sykes (Macmillan).

Information, Please!

A Call for a Plebiscite of Magazine Readers

BY KATHARINE FULLERTON GEROULD

THEY tell us that the American essay is dying. We have been informed that "the pace of the time is too swift for the essayist, and the temper of the public too impatient." Nowadays, instead of essays, we find "crisp articles, blatant exposés, or statistic-laden surveys." No one, I suppose, would deny the tendency of the serious non-illustrated monthlies to set journalism above all else, though the derivation of the word ought perhaps to give them pause. A monthly is, strictly speaking, no place for journalism.

It should be said, however, that the official mourners have chiefly in mind the "familiar" essay, and there is some excuse for thinking the familiar essay, at the moment, unsympathetic to the public mood. The epoch of the New Deal is not an epoch in which people are lured by praise of chimney-sweeps or dissertations on roast pig. I do not, myself, particularly crave these desultory delights. But in the great days of the essay, the essay was never exclusively familiar.

The desuetude of the essay antedates the depression. One of the results, among us, of the Great War was to send all editors passionately scurrying for "dope." People, after the conflict, found themselves immensely uninformed on a vast number of subjects that had suddenly grown important. Almost every fact—religious, social, political, economic—was, somehow or other, germane to the war or the peace. In our new planetary self-consciousness, places, people, phenomena, that had never before interested us except as adjuncts to fiction, became factually significant. Certainly we can thank the war for making the man in the street admit that some event or trend in Tripoli, Inner Mongolia, or West Australia might suddenly hit him where he lived. Travellers over the face of the globe were encouraged to bring back economic and political, rather than esthetic, impressions. Egyptian cotton, Australian radicalism, were more vivid to us than Karnak or Botany Bay. With the widening political controversies, and the growing economic distress, we became practical, to a man; and, having to watch the antipodes as carefully as our own back yards, we enlarged our vision until our eyelids hurt. The average citizen did want information—more of it, perhaps, than he had ever consciously wanted before. So, eventually, we got the spectacle of the old-line magazines forsaking their literary habit, and stuffing us, month after month, with facts, figures, propaganda, and counter-propaganda about Hitler, and the gold standard, and hogs in Kansas, and Manchukuo tariffs. The magazines became homes of journalism.

The first duty of an editor is to interest his natural public. If editors are going "all out" for dope and statistics, it is because they think their readers want dope and statistics. Perhaps they do. Yet I confess my misgivings are such that I should dearly like a poll of readers. Is the depression solely responsible for the fact that people who, ten or fifteen years ago, felt certain magazine subscriptions a necessary part of life, are less anxious to subscribe? I have no doubt that subscription lists have shrunk partly for that reason. Yet I know a lot of people who have stopped subscribing to magazines they once thought they could not live without, for the sole reason that the magazines no longer interest them. No one is going to pay money for a magazine he does not read.

This subsidence to journalism, to information alone, to writing that is so much of and for the moment that it cannot hope to be valid for more than a moment, is not confined to American magazines. English periodicals show the same emphasis on the ephemeral. English periodicals, indeed, are less annoying only because the English write better than we do. Americans write, on the whole, rather badly. Few of us write correct English, and even when we are correct, we are apt to be drab. This is not the place to consider why Americans write badly, though that is a fascinating and fruitful subject. The point is that we do; and my friends the old-line magazines (they have all been

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The Passion to See

THE EXPLORATION OF THE PACIFIC. By J. C. Beaglehole. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1934. $5.

EARTH CONQUERORS: The Lives and Achievements of the Great Explorers. By J. Leslie Mitchell. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1934. $3.50.

Reviewed by JOHN K. WRIGHT

TO write on that immense subject, the history of discoveries and exploration, is to expose oneself to temptations. There is the temptation of details, to which the geographer or historian often succumbs when he devotes page after page to the minutiæ of itineraries and identifications. More imaginative writers, lured by the glamour and heroics of discovery and carried away by their own pens, are tempted to stray from established facts.

Beaglehole, in his "Exploration of the Pacific," yields to neither of these allurements. His is a rare combination of sound scholarship with literary power, and his book might well stand as a model of what a history of exploration should be, or, at any rate, of what a history of exploration should be when designed neither exclusively for specialists nor exclusively for the young. "I have not engaged in speculation from early maps in regard, *e. g.*, to the first discovery of Australia—a sport as pleasant as it is indecisive; nor in identifying islands have I lost them again in an ocean of footnotes." Yet there is enough geography to satisfy the geographically-minded, and enough of storms and calms, of thirst and scurvy, of skirmishes with savage tribes, and of the thrill of landfalls in uncharted seas to suit the youthful in years and in spirit.

"In every great discoverer," Beaglehole begins, "there is a dual passion—the passion to see, the passion to report: and in the greatest this duality is fused into one—the passion to see and to report truly." This sounds a keynote. Character and motives receive as much attention as the record of adventures. Living men, not "intrepid explorers," walk the decks in this book: Magellan, whose "voyage across the Pacific displayed not less the immensity of the spirit of man than of the great South Sea"; Dampier, the scientist-

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This Week

A NEW DEAL IN LIQUOR
By YANDELL HENDERSON
Reviewed by H. V. Kaltenborn

THIRTY-FOUR AND THIRTY-FIVE
By LEONARD BACON

AT THE SHRINE OF ST. CHARLES
By E. V. LUCAS
Reviewed by H. W. Boynton

THE PEDIGREE OF POWER
By ELMER DAVIS

THE WHITE MONK OF TIMBUCTOO
By WILLIAM SEABROOK
Reviewed by David P. Barrows

DELAY IN THE SUN
By ANTHONY THORNE
Reviewed by William Rose Benét

CROSSING THE LINE
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Next Week or Later

BROOKINGS INSTITUTE SURVEYS
By JOHN COWLES

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Strong Words for Weak Spirits

A NEW DEAL IN LIQUOR—A Plea for Dilution. By Yandell Henderson. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1934. $2.

Reviewed by H. V. KALTENBORN

WHEN a distinguished Professor of Applied Physiology talks about liquor we should attend for the sake of our stomachs. Particularly when the learned scholar wants us to drink and is only concerned lest we drink unwisely. Professor Yandell Henderson of Yale hurls a polite curse at prohibition even as he cries out for "A New Deal in Liquor."

His subtitle, "A Plea for Dilution," at once explains his message and his purpose. He warns us not to drink our spirits "neat." Straight whiskey is habit-forming and physically injurious. Highballs are harmless, always assuming that they are "really high." The good professor has no hope of our ever becoming a nation of wine drinkers. That is probably why, as a practical man, he is willing to accept the highball, although he does make a plea for strong wines to replace the potent cocktail.

When you read such a sentence as "Spirits are more destructive to physical man than morphine or cocaine" you may be shocked. But Professor Henderson proves his case. For good measure he adds in an appendix the frightening effect of ardent spirits upon body and mind as delineated by Dr. Benjamin Rush of Pennsylvania University over a century ago.

How then are we to deal with the liquor problem? Repeal has not solved it. At present we forbid all alcoholic beverages in some states and cities and permit all alike in others. It is estimated that two-thirds of the "hard" liquor drunk in the United States is of illicit manufacture. This despite the fact that four-fifths of the people of the United States live in the [illegible] the beer which Professor Henderson approves, are disappointing. Repeal has also done little to improve liquor quality. Yet it is pleasant to hear from Yale's physiological expert that the very best whiskey is more injurious to the body than bathtub gin. Those who refuse to pay high prices for old whiskey can also take comfort in the fact that young whiskey, which means cheap whiskey, may not taste as well but is less rather than more injurious.

Professor Henderson contends that it was the stranglehold secured by the brewers and their tenants the saloonkeepers that turned the majority of our people against beer and forced us into prohibition. The noble experiment might have succeeded if the Volstead Act had fixed five percent instead of one half of one percent as the legal alcoholic content. "If fourteen years ago, instead of prohibition we had put a tax of $5 a gallon on whiskey it would have produced more temperance, more revenue and less bootlegging." It was Professor Henderson who originally declared 3.2 percent beer non-alcoholic and who was thus partly responsible for the happy beer era which preceded repeal.

Today the saloon is back, together with many of the pre-prohibition evils. Even in the District of Columbia from which a model liquor statute was expected, Congress has restored the saloon. It has also placed the same tax on the alcohol contained in non-intoxicating beer as in highly intoxicating liquor.

Professor Henderson's program to promote temperance is simple. Since liquor addicts are developed only by drinking beverages of more than fifteen or twenty percent alcoholic content he would encourage mild drinks and discourage strong drinks. He would not permit liquor to be sold over the same bar with beer. He would lower the tax on beer and increase that on whiskey. He would add to the tax law this sentence: "diluted spirits shall be considered to be wine," which would cheapen the harmless highball. He would impose the strictest regulations to govern the sale of the "narcotic" liquors and leave almost unregulated the sale of milder beverages. He wants the government to differentiate between whiskey and beer as it differentiates between tobacco and cocaine. He would weaken cocktails or replace them with reënforced wines by tax differentials.

At present we are making the mistake of encouraging legal distillers to drive out bootleggers with the result of increasing the number of liquor addicts. "The only real advance toward the solution of the liquor problem lies in gradually diminishing the appetite for liquor."

My only quarrel with the Yale professor is that he underestimates the role wines and particularly native wines can play in the promotion of temperance. California and other states are already producing wines of excellent quality which only need to become known to be widely appreciated.

Professor Henderson's book should help us to a fresh start in solving a problem which has only become more apparent because of our experience with both prohibition and repeal.

The Passion to See

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buccaneer; Tasman and his fellows, "more workaday than heroic, more competent than brilliant"; the fanatic Guiros, in whose mind "the southern continent had come to annihilate all other desires. It was his life. Other things existed only as obstacles; he suffered them with the patience of a martyr; he transcended them with a martyr's death." Finally, Cook, greatest of all, a "genius of the matter-of-fact," in whom, "to a passion for science [illegible] ways of civilization, the story of their voyages is but half told unless it be brought into relation with the currents of history—wars, changes in world trade and the policies of nations, progress in religion, science, and technology. With a fine sense of proportion, Beaglehole supplies the background of larger events and movements that alone renders a chronicle of discovery fully satisfying to mature and thoughtful minds.

"The Exploration of the Pacific" deals with the period from Magellan to Cook,—primarily with the exploration of the ocean and its islands rather than of its shorelines. The central theme is the search for the great Southern Continent. "Earth Conquerors" deals with nine explorers—Leif Ericsson, Marco Polo, Columbus, Cabeza de Vaca, Magellan, Bering, Mungo Park, Burton, and Nansen. The sub-title might well have read "The Lives and Achievements of *Nine* Great Explorers." All may not agree with Mitchell's criterion as to what constitutes preëminence in an explorer. The reviewer, for one, would be inclined to include Captain Cook and Doughty of Arabia among the great. What, to Mitchell, especially distinguished the nine men whom he selected was a passion for the geographically unknown, believed to be purer and less defiled by other motives [illegible] of the Land of Youth, which sometimes betook itself to strange shapes, to the likeness of the City of God [Cabeza de Vaca]; to the likeness of a mental refuge from a half-integrated self [Burton]; to the likeness of the realm of icy knowledge [Nansen].

DON CRISTÓBAL COLON
Columbus as presented in "Earth Conquerors"

The discerning reader may miss in some of the passages in this dramatic volume that deal with controversial matters, that quality of exactness, that tendency to understatement, and that close discrimination between assertions capable of proof and those based on mere hypothesis which mark the work of the critical scholar. Try for example, with map and Yule's text before you, to unravel Marco Polo's route as Mitchell describes it from Acre to Armuz and you will see what is meant. Wineland the Good is too confidently placed near Buzzard's Bay and there is too definite assurance that pre-Columbian civilizations in America were directly influenced by wanderers from west of the Pacific. If, however, glamour, romance, originality of thought and phrase, and poignant characterizations are what one seeks, this book provides them in full measure. To Mitchell the Norsemen were "brutish and desperate and implacable bands of pirates"; Eric the Red was a gangster-leader; Columbus was "the attractive, if mendacious poet, the sincere [illegible] *American Geographical Society.*

Thirty-Four and Thirty-Five

BY LEONARD BACON

THANK God we happened to survive!
Thank God the year is o'er!
All hail to Nineteen Thirty-five!
Thumbs down on Thirty-four!
Let the trumpet sound and the slow drum pound.
Go fire his three rounds blank.
That he did not see us underground
We've only luck to thank.
I'll masquerade as Mackworth Praed*
With such small art as I may,
And like him deride what shall betide
Or what happened yesterday.
For this is clear, it would appear,
(So overgods forecast)
That the character of the coming year
Will be very much like the last.
For Washington will be over-run
With experts as of yore.
And no new thing will be under the sun
Precisely as before.
The conservative will assuredly give
The radical dirty looks.
And the N. R. A. will be a purée
That has spoiled too many cooks.
And the labor-leaders will tell the go-getter
With his back against the wall
That "half a loaf is certainly better
Than never to loaf at all."
And the bears will sell for the fall, the slobs,
While the lean bulls gibber and curse,
And knaves will be paid for undone jobs
And poets for underdone verse.
And tyros will fumble at the lyre
And gossip and discuss
How to attain their heart's desire
By gelding Pegasus.
And we'll see the rise and fall of schools
Of pervert and bawd and bore.
And it will be clear that only fools
Will mock Victorians more.
There'll be stories of idiot dereliction
In language inexact.
And fact will be exposed for fiction
And fiction exposed for fact.
For ours is a world parvipotent
Full of pretence and fraud,
Where it seems the Spender is never spent
And the Auden is never awed.
Let 'em play with their sherds and their cockle-burrs
And posture and piffle and press.
And some day leave off diapers
With the prospect of success.
And authors older but little wiser
In Babylon will babble.
And we'll buy bad grammar from Theodore Dreiser
And affectation from Cabell.
While over in Europe the caldron guggles
And Germans and Serbs and Turks,
With a lively sense of approaching struggles,
Get ready to shoot the works.
And each dictator over his crater
Will look sicklier and littler.
And I'm much mistaken if sooner or later
Some blighter doesn't get Hitler.
And Maynard Keynes will cudgel his brains
New doctrine to disgorge.
And there'll be disasters in aeroplanes
And memoirs by Lloyd-George.
And the Fenris-wolf will be ready to pup
When the April buds appear.
And Stalin will shoot some kulaks up
That he forgot last year.
And Anti-Semites will make a noise
And there'll be weeping in Rama.
And they'll try to hang the Scottsboro boys
In the State of Alabama.
And there will be a scandal in France
And parliamentary devices
That will not alter the circumstance,
When the scandal swells to a crisis.
And a thousand demigods will decline,
Devoured by their father Chronus,
While Congress plunges into a fine
New nose-dive over the bonus
And the Senate will rightly be held up
To popular derision.
And England will lose the America Cup
By a New York Club decision—
And women of means in the magazines
Will look far worse than all wet,
And distinctly duller in full-page five-color,
For a nation-wide cigarette.
And the stupid pageant will stagger and reel
And the veil of the Temple be rent.
And Lippmann will make his votaries feel
Almost intelligent.
And virtue and honor will still be drugs
In a market of tipsters and cranksters
And gangsters will trust to machine-gun-slugs,
And Politicians to gangsters.
And one good thing may the fates contrive,
Though much of their work miscarries:
In 'Thirty-five, whether dead or alive,
May Miss Stein return—to Paris.
But the world will go wrong for the weak and the strong,
And high-minded ideas abort,
And satirical song will be cut too long
And never be cut too short.

* The reference is to Winthrop Mackworth Praed's "Twenty-Eight and Twenty-Nine," written in the last century.

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Loose Sallies of the Mind

AT THE SHRINE OF ST. CHARLES: Stray Papers on Lamb Brought Together for the Centenary of His Death in 1934. *By E. V. Lucas. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.* 1934. $2.

DERBY DAY AND OTHER ADVENTURES. By A. Edward Newton. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1934. $4.

THE HALCYON ERA: A Rambling Reverie of Now and Then. By Lord Ernest Hamilton. With Twenty Illustrations in Collotype by A. K. Macdonald. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1934. $3.50.

Reviewed by H. W. BOYNTON

AS editor of a complete set of Charles and Mary Lamb, Mr. Lucas found the usual assortment of loose ends that would not be let alone when the main task was done. He has been at them off and on ever since, and here are notes on his finds and findings. Some of them have to do with certain of Lamb's intimates whom we have known mainly through his letters: Randal Norris of the Inner Temple, kindest of men, mourned by Lamb as "the last to call him Charley"; Crabb Robinson, a man of parts best remembered as Lamb's friend and correspondent; Tom Manning of Cambridge who inspired, and vied with, many of Elia's most whimsical letters, and Martin Burney, Fanny Burney's nephew, ingenuous and lovable, of whom both the Lambs "were very fond." We need to know all we can about these people, for the light they reflect on their friend's personality. Other names we pursue for the mere sake of running down a chance allusion in some letter or essay of Charles or Mary. Who was "my cousin the bookbinder," once mentioned by Lamb in a letter to Coventry Patmore? Who was the "Hell-Fire Dick" recalled by Mary Lamb as one of the notabilities of Cambridge? Who was that masterpiece of female ugliness Mrs. Conrady? And Mrs. Battle of hearth-and-whist fame? And Captain Jackson of the Bath Road? Also there are less personal matters to be pondered, as, What became of the figure of the winged horse that stood in Lamb's childhood over the entrance of the Inner Temple? And just when was it that Lamb made his famous after-dinner speech consisting of the one word "Gentlemen!"? (Mr. Lucas says it was "praise enough to be called gentlemen unqualified, by such a judge.") If these items are but vestigial toe-joints of genius, they have their value for the enthusiast.

So also, if ruefully, are to be accepted Mr. Lucas's fresh scraps of evidence about the weaknesses of Thackeray's "Saint Charles," his bibulousness, his lapses into mere horseplay and facetiousness, his nervous ineptitude with children.

Johnson's definition of the essay as "a loose sally of the mind" suggests well enough the kind of thing thrown off from time to time by that jovial collector and crusty commentator, A. Edward Newton. He has made himself acceptable to a considerable audience as a gossip of lively spirits and engaging manner. He knows a great deal about first editions and the collecting thereof, and can be amusing about that rather special form of sport. He knows nothing whatever about horses or horse-racing and can be equally amusing about them. And whatever his main theme he can blandly abandon it to give or to repeat his bankers' (adverse) opinions of American politicians, "a lot of crooks," of the "group of ignorant and wicked men who call themselves bankers," or of "Democracy, that horrid farce which thoughtful men fear." Mr. Newton finds much more to admire in England than in these States, and quotes with gratification somebody's remark that London is his "spiritual home." As a true Johnsonian he is a sound Tory and reactionary, and proud of it. Even the figure of a Hearst in his Californian paradise assumes a sort of majesty, for does he not represent Propputty and Power? The American chapters in the book, his accounts of travels in the West and far West, are notably feeble in comparison with the English and European notes. For these papers as a group, we must take them or leave them as the "loose sallies" of a man of leisure who can afford a testy manner and cannot conceal a twinkling eye. The concluding papers on the Brontës and their country show how well this light essayist can do at a more orderly sort of writing.

Lord Ernest Hamilton's "rambling reverie of now and then," as the subtitle hath it, offers a fresh bundle of notes on the Victorian era by a survivor. He is a younger brother of the Lord Frederick Hamilton who has written several books of Victorian reminiscence in heavier vein. Lord Ernest writes with ease, with the slightly conscious nonchalance of rank, with the indulgent mockery of one who looked on the later years of the "Midvics" with the eyes of a younger generation. The early contempt he felt for the prohibitions and hypocrisies of the time may have been less summary than time makes it out. For all his man of the world acceptance, he looks on modern types and ways with some distaste and bewilderment. His memory of the past, as with most contemporaries, is a mixture of apology and regret. He smiles at the Victorian maiden, her obligatory demureness, her tiny accomplishments, her rigid chaperonage, her favorite "tales of romantic and well-muzzled love." But it is clear that she keeps for him a charm in no way equaled by the "Daphne dear" whom he apostrophizes as the typical young female of the jazz age.

For its good humor and the slight flavor of elderly doggishness observable in the above-quoted passage, the book is more readable than most effusions of the kind. Its illustrations in collotype are delicious.

Information, Please!

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my friends at one time or another, and I, at least, am loyal), by voluntarily declining upon journalism, have abdicated one very important part of their job. They used to be nurseries and laboratories of decent prose. Solid reputations were often made, first of all, in the serious periodicals. One long-past year, when we rented a cottage from friends, we found the walls of the study lined with large volumes—bound files of the *Atlantic, Harper's, Scribner's,* and the *Century.* We had, in those volumes, ample reading for the whole summer. Indeed, I think the shelf-space could not have been better filled. Does any private person bind and keep those magazines now, I wonder? I doubt it, unless habit in some cases is overpowering. Nothing but style, quality, literary virtue, can prolong timeliness, and make the writing of yesteryear immediately interesting. If the year 1900 is readable, and the year 1930 is not, there is a reason.

I shall be told that authors and editors were differently situated before the war. Especially, I shall be told that advertising has fallen off and that budgets are slim. I think all that does not touch my question. My question is, and remains: do most magazine readers (you understand that I am not speaking of weeklies, the women's magazines, or the pulp products) really enjoy what editors are giving them? Does no large number feel, as I feel, that newspaper supplements and books hot from the press exist to document them on economic and political matters; that when they take up a magazine they want something besides Hitler and hogs? Do they never mutter "ripeness is all," and fling the magazine down unread? Editors, remember, are not giving us journalism because they personally prefer it: they are giving us journalism because they believe we prefer it. Do their readers prefer it, is what I sincerely desire to know. If they do, the editors are justified. (And if they do, it is a blackish outlook for American letters.) I do not care to believe that readers prefer journalism until I have it from the readers themselves. That is why I crave the doubtless unattainable poll—a plebiscite, I confess, more vitally interesting to me (for every social and psychologic reason) than the one presently to be held in the Saar. But the magazines, alas! are more likely to report to me about the Saar than about American taste.

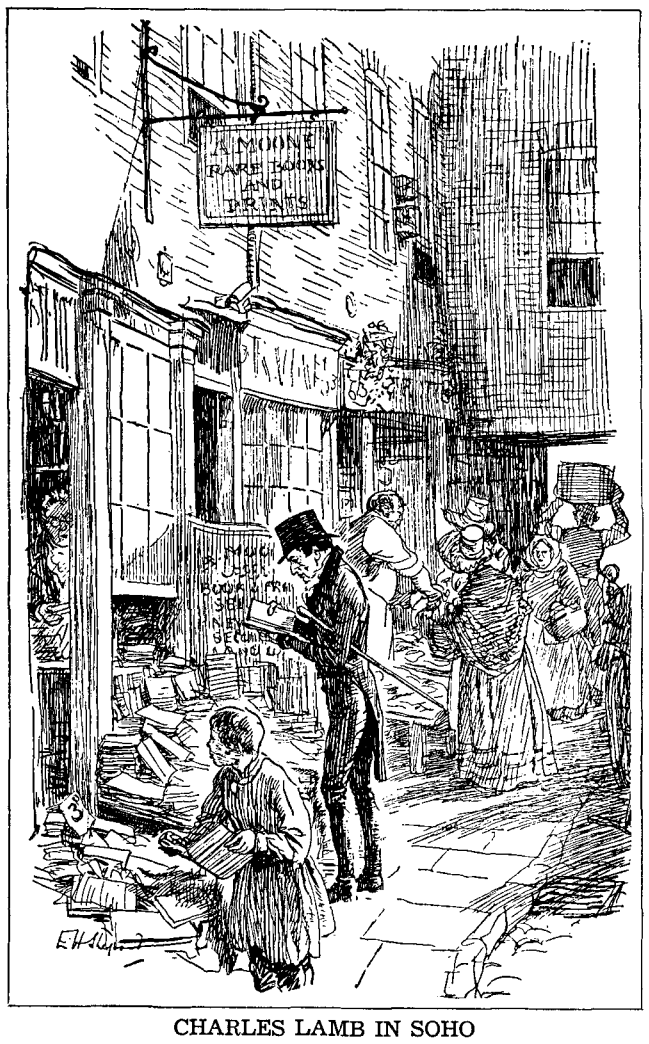
I have been referring chiefly to the essay. Fiction and poetry used perhaps to seem more important, even in the balanced ration of a monthly. As poetry, however, has usually to wait on considerations of space and make-up, and as America has (to the best of my belief: I may, of course, be wrong) only one considerable poet now living, the matter of magazine verse need not be contemplated at length. Periodical fiction means either the short story or the serialized novel. The serialized novel appears less and less in the old-line magazines, and very likely for good reasons. I can think of one reason, myself: that the full-length novel runs through eight or ten issues, and that editors, with their eyes strained for "news," do not like to mortgage that space ahead. The short story is going through an orgy of experimentation that makes any particular example a gamble. Besides, when a young writer has once made a short-story reputation, he is likely to be bribed by the illustrated magazines or by Hollywood. So we will leave fiction and poetry to one side, and consider only the essay—and that briefly. For I am not expounding: I have twisted myself into an interrogation-point.

The average man, we said, wants "dope" more than ever, since the war, and editors tend to think that he wants it exclusively. All good art is, in one sense, "dope." It conveys, that is, authentic information. But Arnold or Pater or Max Beerbohm or W. C. Brownell or Agnes Repplier conveys information in one way, and an Associated Press despatch conveys information in quite another. While we live in this world as citizens, we must not confess to being tired of facts: but we may, respectably, be tired of facts raw, unpondered, unalchemized. One may not weary of truth, but one may weary of news. One may even want to throw Hitler and hogs into the ash-can. . . . A critic once said to me, concerning a well-known expert, "X— is an excellent reporter, but he has no general ideas." No first-rate essay was ever written, I suspect, into which the writer put, if only by implication, less than his whole knowledge of life. Special information, even, is of little use unless it is accurately related to its larger context, to the course and flow of human history, unless its bearing is made known. No fact, indeed, is worth anything—even in a murder trial—without its accurate interpretation. The perfect essayist could write a good essay on Hitler or on hogs, and I should be enchanted to read it—but he has not done it yet, and I am not yet enchanted.

"When the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them and go no further," said Bacon, himself no mean essay writer. "To see life steadily and see it whole" is the counsel of perfection a great Victorian essayist gave himself. That is, indeed, a counsel of perfection; it is not intellectually easy to see life steadily and see it whole. The attempt to do so, however, will prevent any writer from offering us mere unappraised facts. It will keep alive in him a sense of values so that he will try, at least, to see his facts in their due proportion and perspective; will force him to decide whether his facts are symptomatic, and, if so, of what. He will bring the past to bear on the present, he will find the right analogies and make the right syntheses. In other words, he will write an essay, not an article. I know of almost no essayist who has not at times written articles rather than essays; but if he is a good essayist, he knows the difference between the two. "I sell not bread, but yeast," says Unamuno; and the proper essay starts a process of fermentation within the reader's mind. The proper essay is not a table of facts to be committed to memory; it goes beyond facts as the writer sees them, to truth as he sees it.

The young writers who are practising fiction need not, perhaps, despair. They have the pulp-magazines, which apparently nowadays can make reputations; can at least give an author a springboard whence he can leap into book publication and best-sellership. The pulp-magazines, with their low literary requirement, are a poor and perilous substitute for the serious monthlies. I repeat: I think the latter are abdicating a responsibility in at once narrowing their fictional hospitalities and lowering their fictional standards. Perhaps the short story—which was at its best in America—would not have sunk to its present low estate if the more dignified editors had not lost interest in it—"sold" as they have been to the news idea. One must admit that much of the newer and younger fiction is not especially suited to their pages, and they may be bewildered. Personally, I regret this state of things. I like good short stories—I should hardly be a good American if I did not—and I miss them from the monthlies where I used to find them. The young practiser of fiction, however, is not absolutely homeless. It is the young essayist who has no place to lay his head.

We are all hedonists, I suspect; and what I resent is having (outside of bound volumes) nothing but newspapers to read. A person of my age looks forward with dread to the extinction of the serious magazines. If the intelligent young liked the monthlies this way, I should feel it my duty to be silent; but apparently the intelligent young do not read them at all, and are therefore no guarantee of their future. Am I facing a day when I can buy myself no pleasure for thirty-five cents? When there is no worthy printed matter to be had between three cents and two-fifty? When I must be surfeited with information and starved of knowledge? When the camera shall have displaced the brush, when everything shall be stated and nothing shall be pondered? And—this is all my question—is no one, except me, going to regret it?



CHARLES LAMB IN SOHO

Drawing by E. H. Shepard, from "Everybody's Lamb," reproduced for the centenary of the great essayist.

Katharine Fullerton Gerould has contributed stories, essays, and verse to magazines, and is the author of a number of books, among which may be mentioned "Valiant Dust," "Conquistador," "The Aristocratic West," "The Light That Never Was," and a volume of essays, "Modes and Morals."

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The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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They Broke the Aqueducts

M. Benda, who a year or so ago attacked the intellectuals of France for sacrificing the pursuit of truth to the exigencies of politics, now turns (in this month's *Foreign Affairs*) to that tumultuous Youth which in every European country is demanding violence, direct action, and the dangerous life. Psychologists have said that the impatience of the young with the methods of persuasion is pathological, and due to the disillusions of idleness in a depression, to the inferiority of defeat. M. Benda would assign another cause. He believes (speaking for France) that, through changes in teaching methods and still more through unwillingness to hear, the age-long influence of the classics is slackening. There is a new romanticism of violence abroad that grows apace because it is ignorant of those triply distilled essences of experience which are the soul of classic literature.

This is no French problem; it is a question aimed sharply at civilization, West and East—for it is very French, but quite wrong, to limit, as he does, the healing power of classic literature to the Græco-Roman works which, with their offspring in Gallic literature, have been the mainstay of French education.

It is impossible here to enter upon a discussion of such an intricate and far-spreading theme. Yet one may state one or two pertinent questions and perhaps make a little clearer the real issue in such a discussion. The literature which we call classic, and of which English, French, German, Italian, Hindu, and Chinese can supply examples as excellent as if less haloed than the Greek, is a literature intensely aware of every distraction by greed, hate, violence, and every need of escape for the restless ego, which the modern world can show. There is to classic literature nothing new in our economic problem but its terms, nothing new in our spiritual problems except their circumstances. It is a literature which in many instances has been created in dictatorships, or in the midst of wars; it is a literature in which pessimism and optimism have equal expression, and where reality is always in debate. What distinguishes it is neither conservatism nor radicalism, but only the sense that the mind is in perpetual struggle against an anarchy which is variously placed inside and outside of the universe, and that there is no recourse except to the best fruits of valorous and experienced minds. The classic principle is just this: that there is a continuity in cultural experience which, like the aqueduct of a Roman city, is broken at peril, ignorance of the brave adventures of the spirit being a crime only equalled by a slow throttling of their vitality by dull men who teach the form and let the content die.

Hence the acute dangers of a moment in the world's history like this. In Russia and wherever the communist religion spreads, a vigorous economic doctrine obsesses the youthful mind, as Mohammedanism obsessed the Arabs, seeming to render valueless all past imaginative experience, and obscuring all values except those material ones which Marxism makes not the aim, to be sure, but the means, of its powerful enterprise. In Germany and Italy the middle-class mind, equally under the influence of past calamities, grips with equal fervor the religion of the omnipotent state, making equally pallid, when not entirely rejecting, every area of tradition which cannot be used to strengthen the emotional drive. And in our country, and in Great Britain, a century of utilitarianism, capped by the demoralization of war, has given us a youth awake to science, already actively at work upon the reconstruction of a tottering order, but extraordinarily insensitive to, if not ignorant of, the flow of experience imaginatively interpreted, from the past. It is not as the last generation of conservative educators thought, because youth no longer studies Latin and Greek. The life had been let drip out of Latin and Greek before it ceased studying them. It is rather that the humanistic tradition which has been the balance wheel of all those cultures which through so many cataclysms have survived to meet in our modern world, has been shaken, despised, or forgotten in the distress, the hurly burly, or the dismay of a profound unsettlement of human values, lasting now for more than twenty years.

The question twenty years ago was whether the old men were awake. The question now is whether the young men and women are aware of what the past has learned of the nature of the race to which they belong. If there are signs, ominous but not yet truly indicative, of a new barbarism today, the widespread ignorance of the classics as here defined is either an accompaniment or a cause. If the first, our culture as well as our economic system is dying because the age prefers barbarism to the life it is leading; if the second, we are suffering from shock and from the distractions of recovery and reformation, in which case we need not so much fear death as seek a cure. *Immortalis est in cognitione sapientiae.*

Shortly before the outbreak of the war in 1914 "The Great Illusion," by Norman Angell, was one of the most widely read books of the day. In it Mr. Angell set forth his theory of the economic futility of war, maintaining that conflict is disastrous to victor as well as vanquished, that trade cannot be won by force of arms, and that even if it could be victory would not be worth the cost. The onset of the struggle drove the book from public attention, but never were the tenets of a theory more triumphantly established by the march of events than were Sir Norman's. Far from resting content, however, with the vindication of theories once hotly assailed, Sir Norman has gone ahead, writing steadily on problems pertaining to international peace. In 1932 appeared his "The Unseen Assassins" and in 1933, "Chaos or Control," and now in 1934 the Nobel Peace Prize had been awarded to him.

The Saturday Review recommends

This Group of Current Books:

THE FACTS OF LIFE IN POPULAR SONG. By SIGMUND SPAETH. *Whittlesey House.* Does for present-day popular music what "Read 'Em and Weep" did for that of the nineties.

MOBILIZING FOR CHAOS. By O. W. RIEGEL. *Yale University Press.* A discussion of propaganda for national ends.

DELAY IN THE SUN. By ANTHONY THORNE. *Doubleday, Doran.* A story of tourists in Spain.

This Less Recent Book:

ANGELS AND EARTHLY CREATURES. By ELINOR WYLIE. *Knopf.* A posthumous volume of verse by one of the most distinguished poets of our day.

"ARE YOU SURE THAT'S WHAT I MEANT IN THIS BOOK?"

To the Editor: *Some Reasons Why People Don't Read*

Space does not permit printing in full the replies to the editorial, "Why," of our December 1 issue. The following excerpts give in substance the suggestions received on why Americans do not read.

Laziness

SIR:—Your "Why?" editorial tempts me to give an answer out of my 34 years' experience in the public library of an industrial town. First, I must say a word about your definition of the "public." That part of ours that is educated, "with money enough and leisure enough to read" is not the widely reading group. Our intelligent readers are those who *make* opportunity for using books. Take our collection for boys and girls—who are reading the best books? Not the children of prosperous and educated citizens but those who come from foreign-born parents and exist in miserable tenements. Going on to the men and women who frequent our library, it is the workers in the factories, many now unemployed, and young Jewish students, who are demanding "good books." . . .

I believe that one reason why the thousands turned out by the colleges do not read, is that their instructors to not kindle any flame. . . .

Perhaps the chief reason for the lack of readers is *laziness.* After all, to read intelligently does require gumption.

GRETA E. BROWN.
Library of the New Britain Institute
New Britain, Connecticut.

Library Records

SIR:—Here is the record of one New England city. In 1900 the inhabitants borrowed from their public library an average of 2.6 volumes per capita; in 1910, 5.9 volumes per capita; in 1920, 8.3 volumes per capita; in 1930, 11.8 volumes per capita; in 1933, 16.8 volumes per capita. . . .

If this were the record of a single city, it would have little significance; but the same tendency is observable in public libraries throughout the country. Some fifteen or twenty years ago the American Library Association fixed an annual circulation of five volumes per capita as the standard for an active public library. So great has been the increase in the use of libraries everywhere that the figure has had to be revised upwards. Meanwhile, not only has the use of the older libraries grown enormously, but hundreds of new public libraries have been established. Are you sure that the "lamentable fact" is a fact?

H. C. W.

Because

SIR:—As I observe the polite apathy of school and college graduates to excitingly good literature, I become increasingly aware that somehow, somewhere along the line teachers have failed. . . .

As long as college survey courses spend so much time on Spenser's "Faerie Queene," admittedly the esoteric product of a poet's poet, that there's no time at the end of the course for A. E. Housman or Masefield, just so long will college graduates relax into the pulps and cheap novels. When the splendid, violent genius of Swift is not dwelt upon so exhaustively and exhaustingly that there's no room for the incisive, diabolical sanity of Aldous Huxley in college courses; when Virginia Woolf and Dorothy Richardson take their places with George Eliot and the Brontë sisters—then will college men and women perceive some connection between themselves and the titans of literary tradition. . . .

I once tried to present the intricate cross currents of seventeenth century England to an intelligent, rebellious lady of 19 who loathed Milton and even dear old Robert Herrick. Finally I gave her Rose Macaulay's poignant "The Shadow Flies." She needed no more to send her into an intemperate reading of seventeenth century literature. . . .

VIRGINIA ELLIOTT CAMPBELL.
Greenwood Mountain, Maine.

One in a Thousand

SIR:—I suggest that one reason why thoughtful people buy so few books in our day is that not one author in a thousand (or say, five thousand) has "ideas" to fill a volume. A short paper is usually the limit, and all have learned that it is so.

EDGAR E. ROBINSON.
Riverside, Cal.

Gregarious Go-Getter

SIR:—We have in our modest library several old volumes of poetry, one of which is entitled "Fireside Encyclopædia of Poetry." At the time this encyclopædia of poetry was published, people actually sat by their firesides and read—but that was before the motor car and the movie. It is so easy to climb in the motor car and go places and see things, and this going places and seeing things has become a real disease, until nobody stays home and reads any more. . . .

The following bit of free verse (if it can be called that?) we wrote in a mad moment, after being visited by a gregarious go-getter:

SATURATION POINT

Samantha is culture-conscious;
Samantha attends luncheons and lectures,
Absorbing culture as a sponge
Soaks up water . . .
Samantha's high-powered motor car,
even,
Is culture-conscious,
Purring poetically
As it carries Samantha
Wedged behind the wheel,
Like a stuffed Stoic!

Samantha never reads a book,
A play, or a poem,
She is too busy . . .
But she will surely win a medal
For the endurance record
In the famous culture Marathon!

GENE BOARDMAN HOOVER.
Kansas City, Missouri.

Teaching at Fault

SIR:—I have been a teacher of English, and incidentally Head of the English Department, in public high schools, in three different states in the East. The situation you speak of is universal.

The first reason that comes to my mind as to why so few adults are "willing or able to read extensively on their own" is that neither high school nor college teachers of English influence deeply enough their students' selection of reading in after life because they do not select prose

(*Continued on page* 400)

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The Pedigree of Power

Is there a Parallel between Roman Civilization and Our Own?

BY ELMER DAVIS

"ROMAN HISTORY," says Mr. G. P. Baker in a book* which lies before us, "still remains the explanation of what we are, and the key to what we shall be." There are perils in writing history for purposes of edification or even illustration; but Mr. Baker, who in his Roman biographies has proved his mastery of factual detail, argues plausibly enough that the general reader wants to know not only what happened to the Romans, why they rose and fell, but what it meant; "the historian must show not only how or why something is true, but the effect produced upon our total experience by its established truth—an effect which is liable to vary from generation to generation."

In other words, the historian's interpretation (and the reader's) is colored by the ideas of his time. The Marxians, of course, would say that it is more than colored, it is created by the interests of his class. Well, class interest plays its part in a man's state of mind, greater or less according to his nature; so does the condition of his liver; so do countless other factors in different men. But a factor perhaps as powerful as any is the impulse to associate what happened in the past with what is happening in the present, to see how they resemble and how they differ, to see what can be learned from the successes and mistakes of other men. Mr. Baker hardly ever cites a modern analogy; he is a good enough historian to know that there are no exact historical parallels. But as a modern Englishman he has constantly before his eyes the problem of preserving the nucleus of an ancient and valuable tradition—originally the possession of a class—in an expanding and changing empire. Contemporary Americans will read his study of republican history chiefly as the story of a conflict between constitutional checks and balances, devised for and useful in a simple society, and the pressing needs of a far more complex civilization; while his survey of the later empire suggests dolorous thoughts on the serviceability of emergency measures adopted to bring recovery from a profound crisis.

These, it must be repeated, are resemblances, near or remote, not parallels. Former Governor Hadley of Missouri, whose study of the Augustan reforms** has just been reissued after twelve years, was impressed with the similarities between Roman civilization and our own, which indeed are striking; but the differences are fundamental. The Roman world was extensive, cosmopolitan, complex, with a good deal of wealth (for that day) which was badly distributed; to that extent it was like our own. But though it had the rudiments of capitalist handicraft industry, its economy was chiefly agricultural; the existence of chattel slavery, property in persons who were often culturally superior to their owners, was a basic difference; and the religious and ideological presuppositions were wholly unlike those of any modern people. The program, and the personality, of Theodore Roosevelt in 1912 have been compared to those of Tiberius Gracchus; but the economic background of the Gracchan age and the mental conditioning of the men on both sides of the political struggle were something to which the Bull Moose year offered only a remote analogy. The crisis from which Aurelian and Diocletian engineered a sort of recovery was far more acute and prolonged, different in kind as well as in degree, from that which has lately afflicted us (twentieth-century China is a far closer parallel); Diocletian's unsuccessful attempt at price-fixing bears some likeness to General Johnson's, but he that is deceived thereby is not wise.

Read Roman history with such qualifications in mind, and you will get out of it plenty of material for reflection. Mr. Baker never crowds the resemblances for more than they are worth. Packing a survey of all Roman history into six hundred pages, he has to leave out a good deal; but it is surprising how much he has managed to get in. His limitations, to be sure, will shock a good many moderns. Personalities are treated as highly important. Economics comes into the story chiefly by implication, racial changes as a rule receive only passing mention; but you see the effects of both, and Mr. Baker has subordinated these factors with the instinct of an artist. What he is writing is essentially the political, institutional, and ideological history of Rome; which after all is the most outstanding aspect of Roman history and perhaps the most useful to the modern student who wonders how on earth his own society can be made to run a little less inefficiently. Accordingly the publishers, with a felicity unusual in a book jacket, have described the work as a study in "the pedigree of power."

Pedigrees are apt to spring from the legendary, and the early history of Rome is beclouded by legend. But recently there has been a reaction in English-speaking countries against the contemptuous dismissal of Livy. His story may have been over-decorated, what ought to have happened rather than what did happen; but, says Mr. Baker, "if what he gives us is not the early history of Rome, then there is no early history of Rome." Somebody, for example, unquestionably delimited the *pomoerium* of Roma Quadrata; the Romans thought his name was Romulus and we do not know that it was anything else. And when you have eliminated the obviously legendary from Livy's story, it is surprising how well the main outline checks with what is known from other sources. Even the famous republican statesmen—Cincinnatus, Camillus, Curius Dentatus, Decius Mus, and so on—are more plausibly accepted, in their traditional characters, than rejected. Allow for the exaggerations of family and partisan pride, and there is still no good reason to doubt that these men lived, substantially as we know them.

They built the Roman state, an achievement any modern may envy. The modern parallel leaps out very early in the story; the rationalized and efficient state of Servius Tullius and Tarquinius Superbus was, and had to be for survival, a state of large-scale agriculture, the only important industry of the time. The great estates belonged, naturally, to the aristocracy, the patricians; whoever they were, wherever they came from, they had the inestimable advantage of a homogeneous tradition, the *mos majorum;* and far down into Roman history—perhaps too far—Mr. Baker finds the driving force of senatorial policy in the endeavor to preserve that tradition, in whatever changing forms, as the only force that could weld men of diverse origins into the Roman people. But those other men—the plebeians, later the urban poor and the provincials—had aspirations of their own, political and economic.

Accordingly, when an aristocratic and military revolt had overthrown the monarchy, the patricians faced a plebeian demand for debt relief and a Latin demand for autonomy which they resisted in the interest not only of profit but of efficiency. The one formula which might have harmonized both demands—collective control of a rationalized agriculture—was beyond the imagination of men of the time; even today the Russians are finding it hard to enforce, by the most drastic methods. So later the latifundia that "ruined Italy" after the Second Punic War were a natural and unplanned expedient for somehow utilizing waste land, an emergency measure for restoring production after a ruinous war; socially the remedy, in the end, may have been worse than the disease, but at the time they too could have been defended, however shortsightedly, from the standpoint of economic efficiency.

But the great characteristic of the early republic was its ability to compromise class struggles. No class ever surrendered power without a fight? The Roman patricians are the classic refutation of that dogma. Faced again and again with plebeian secessions—essentially strikes by the army—they sat down and debated, conciliated, and (if they had to) gave in. The process educated the plebeians, too; if they had not the old tribal *mos majorum* as a guide, they had by the time they gained the highest offices a long training in a tradition of debate and compromise, of sacrificing something of class and personal interest for the higher interest of the state. The one defect of this process by which patricians and plebeians were fused into a nation was that it took time—years of argument over basic constitutional changes; but in the early Jeffersonian days of the republic, the Romans had time to spare.

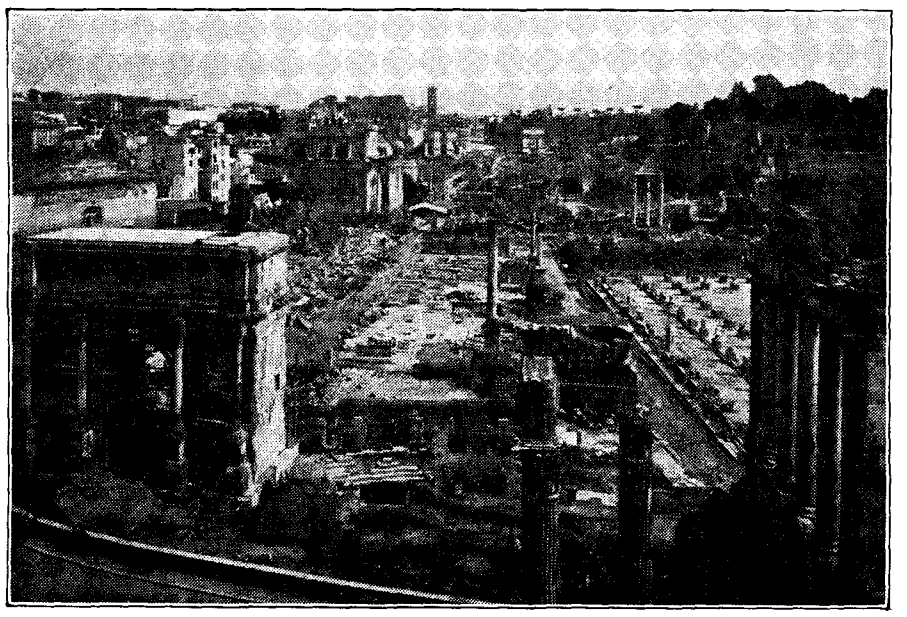
So the unified nation proved its mastery over its Latin allies—perhaps the greatest military achievement of Rome, thinks Mr. Baker, as the political settlement that followed was the greatest achievement of Roman statecraft, the framework on which the Empire was built. The Samnite war proved something else. The decline of Greece, the exploits of Alexander, had shown men that the old city state was outdated. What would take its place, unless world empire? The Romans beat the Samnite federation, as they later beat the Achæan federation, because they had more or less accidentally devised the "nucleate state," a grouping of allies around the "central core of mutual trust and loyalty" in the Roman citizen body. Patrician and plebeian had learned to respect each other, above all they had learned that no class advantage was worth the disruption of society; and their beaten enemies had learned that it paid to stand by a temperate and reasonable conqueror.

So the nucleate state, with the vision and imagination of plebeian consuls leavening the solid conservatism of the patricians, mastered Italy, and repelled an invasion by the most distinguished general of the time. Pyrrhus, thinks Mr. Baker, has been overrated; the Romans admired him because he was a sportsman, but as a strategist he was not so much. Possibly; but he was the most serious threat Rome had met up to that time, and Rome beat him. "The triumph of Curius Dentatus was the most wonderful occasion that Rome had ever beheld"—the artistic climax, the happy ending, to the story of the unification of Italy under wise and moderate rule.

Unfortunately the history of a nation, or of an individual, cannot be compressed within the canons of artistic fitness; after the happy ending, the story goes right on to something less satisfying. United Italy could not escape a clash with Carthage; and the Punic Wars forced Rome to face, in the Barcidæ, something she had never had to face before—the "dæmoniac intelligence." For the conquest of Italy, the repulse of Pyrrhus, the old republican virtues—prudence, solidity, integrity, patience—had been sufficient; but to deal with Hamilcar and Hannibal needed something else, something Rome had never produced and never needed—imagination. The old Roman character embodied in Fabius Cunctator was able to hold Hannibal to a scoreless tie in the second quarter after he had scored a couple of touchdowns against Flaminius and Varro; but to beat Hannibal Rome had to produce Scipio—an individual, not a type. The early republic had suppressed individuals, on the rare occasions when they emerged; but the republic of the Punic Wars could win only through producing an individual, and the consequences became apparent in Scipio's grandsons, the Gracchi.

The nucleate state proved its power of survival and won the war; but much of Italy and many of the Romans were ruined in the process. By the second century B.C. the Roman farmer who was occasionally a soldier had become a soldier who was occasionally a farmer, if he had any farm left when the wars were over; and the terrific losses, the influx of foreigners into the Italian vacuum, made the Roman quality "less and less a racial one and more a product of education." Unfortunately at this time some constitutional amendments made the Roman government, already full of checks and balances, more checked and balanced than ever; times had changed—and the Romans, nobles or commoners, had changed with them. The second century Senate may have been, as Mr. Baker thinks, basically concerned with the preservation of the traditional nucleus of culture and spirit; but it loved forms and ignored facts, it had become largely an assembly of James M. Becks. Then came the Gracchi—men of a new type, flowering of the Scipionic shoot—who respected facts and regarded the constitution as made for man, not man for the constitution. Something had to be done; and when class interest reinforced by sentiment checked Tiberius Gracchus through the intervention of another tribune, Gracchus proposed to break the deadlock by the invention of the recall. No wonder the conservatives were shocked. When two officials were diametrically opposed, in the old days, nothing happened; and after ten or fifteen years' debate the original issue on which they had disagreed was compromised. But the complex, teeming, imperial, rich-and-poor Rome of the Gracchan Age could not afford to wait. The early patricians had debated, conceded if they had to; but the second-century oligarchs cried "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" and appealed to force. From that moment the spirit that had made Rome was dead.

But the empire won by that spirit remained, was constantly being increased, and something had to be done about it. The Senate of the last century of the republic was as void of ideas as American conservatives today; it understood nothing but force, and from an unexpected quarter force arose against it. With the will of the popular assemblies defeated by violence or trickery, the army gradually became the representative of the people—but a professional army, no longer a general conscript levy; and ultimately it became the master of Rome. The real fall of



RUINS OF THE ROMAN FORUM

* *TWELVE CENTURIES OF ROME. By G. P. Baker. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1934. $4.*

** *ROME AND THE WORLD TODAY. By Herbert S. Hadley. Foreword by William Allen White. Third Edition, revised. New York: Minton, Balch & Company. 1934. $2.50.*

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the republic dates, thinks Mr. Baker, not from Caesar's "revolutionary" consulship just before he went to Gaul; but from the election of Bibulus, his conservative colleague, who tried to halt Caesar's program by technicalities. It was the conflict between the imperative need, and the old checks and balances devised for a different age, that we see today; but Caesar, backed by Pompey's army, could brush the technicalities aside. Caesar had tried to enlist Cicero as a fourth corner of the triumvirate, to form a coalition government; but the moderate conservatives held aloof, the reactionaries obstructed—and so began the sequence of events that led to Actium.

The Empire was Rome's achievement, morally as well as materially, but this study is concerned more with origins and causes than with results. Mr. Baker—properly, in view of his approach—devotes little more than a third of his history to the Empire; and in imperial history, with which this reviewer is more familiar, it is a constant temptation to question him. Was it really dynastic pride, the sentiment of the descendants of Augustus, conscious of capacity but barred from the throne by their sex, that actuated the two Agrippinas? Was Domitian almost the last appearance (except for the Illyrian emperors of the third century) of the old type of plebeian statesman? We know him chiefly from a great artist who hated him with a violent personal hatred; still it is hard to see that he was the far-seeing statesman that Mr. Baker discerns. Neither aristocracy nor people were any more the Romans of old; the Senate after Vespasian became more and more an imperial peerage representing the educated and propertied classes of the whole Empire, and the army, if it represented the "people," was drawn now chiefly from the frontiersman, the hill billies. In the Antonine age the two elements seemed harmonized, by the principle of adoption for the succession to the principiate. But Mr. Baker underlines the accidental factors in the adoption of successors by a series of childless emperors; the whole thing seemed "a splendid fluke," and Marcus Aurelius could not, or at least would not, disregard the hereditary claim of Commodus—after whom the deluge.

Rostovtzeff's analysis of the military anarchy of the third century as a class struggle, the army representing the exploited classes of the Empire against the urban and civilized rich, may be an oversimplification, but is the most plausible interpretation of that dark age that has yet been offered. Mr. Baker sees the Senate, made up of large landholders, concerned with peace and economy, aware of the disastrously accelerating dilution of the "Roman nucleus" and endeavoring to check it as far as possible; the generals, on the other hand, were aware of unrest and migration in Northern Europe, and concentrated on the problems of the frontier. But to represent Maximinus Thrax, for instance, as a far-seeing strategist who subordinated everything to the military and financial needs of a campaign to conquer Germany, is to do a violence to Herodian and all the other sources which Mr. Baker refused to do to Livy. That ancient Pancho Villa and his army do not seem to have looted with regret, for disinterested reasons of state.

At last the Illyrian emperors drove out the barbarians and reunited the wreck of the Empire; but from then on men had to do what they could. The regimentation of business, undertaken as a desperate emergency measure in the third-century wars, had to be continued and solidified into Constantine's caste system. Aurelian, Diocletian, Constantine all did what they could, living from hand to mouth; but the Roman tradition had gone with the Roman blood, poured out in the great wars or diluted by emigration to the provinces, and religion seemed the only bond of unity that was left. By a combination of merit and luck Christianity triumphed and Constantine, for a moment, seemed to have established a firm hereditary monarchy. But then intervened an incalculable chance—Crispus, Constantine's able son, was undermined by a stepmother zealous for her own children, and the old curse of civil wars came back. The only unity that could be maintained was religious; the last two great armies of the Western Empire were wiped out in the establishment of Catholicism, and the Goths came in.

It was to Augustus that Hadley looked, a dozen years ago, as an example of what might be done to restore a world all but wrecked by war. His book is sometimes uncritically eulogistic; but it is of value as representing an estimate of the Roman lesson by a man of insight and shrewdness who had had considerable experience in politics and government. He ascribes the breakdown of the Augustan structure chiefly to two causes: the plague in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, and the freezing of society into hereditary castes working for the state—a scheme, he observes, which had "all the evils, disadvantages, and dangers of modern socialism with none of its possible advantages." This process was completed in the reign of Constantine, but it had begun much earlier; the decisive step was perhaps taken by Aurelian, the great Restorer. Leave the sectaries to argue whether the end product more closely resembled fascist Italy or communist Russia; there were vital differences from both, but it may be that if Mr. Hadley had lived to revise his book he would not have let the title of his last chapter stand as "How Socialism Helped to Destroy the Roman Empire." In 1922 he wrote:

> These laws establishing a system of caste, destroying the right of private ownership of property, denying to a man of ability the right to advancement or extra reward for his services, brought upon the Roman world a social, industrial, and economic breakdown that was the natural result of these efforts to run counter to the inflexible rules of human nature and the inexorable laws of supply and demand.

Anyone unfamiliar with late imperial history, reading that sentence, would draw from it an analogy with modern conditions that would be completely misleading. You would not know from Hadley that the breakdown had preceded the adoption of these desperate expedients; that it had been going on for half a century, and had carried the Roman world to depths lower than either Russia or China has touched in our time. This argument will appeal to those, and only those, who assume that nothing but Roosevelt's interference with business prevents us from now enjoying a prosperity more splendid than that of 1928.

Roman regimentation of business, like

THE EMPEROR AUGUSTUS
From an ancient sculpture

our own much feebler and very different efforts in that direction, was in the beginning an effect, not a cause. But it in turn became a cause, and its effects were disastrous; the system of Diocletian and Constantine was, as Rostovtzeff remarks, a sort of permanent and organized depression from which much of the Mediterranean world has not yet recovered. Men who had to find some immediate remedy for a desperate situation seized upon the best thing they could think of, and it was the fault of their judgment, not of their intention, that the remedy was almost as pernicious as the evil itself. It remains to be seen if Mr. Roosevelt is to be the Augustus of our time, or only the Diocletian.

An Errant Brother in Africa

THE WHITE MONK OF TIMBUCTOO. By William Seabrook. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1934. $3.50.

Reviewed by DAVID P. BARROWS

TO one with any proper interest in the puzzling life of Timbuctoo, this book evokes little but irritation. The subject of the life is a Frenchman, Auguste Dupuis, who was born in a peasant family near Château Thierry in 1865, was educated for the priesthood in a seminary at Soissons, and who in 1890 entered the missionary order of the "White Fathers," founded for militant service in Africa by the eminent Cardinal Lavigerie. When, in 1894, the column of Joffre, later Marshal and victor on the Marne, made the French masters of this gateway to the Sahara, Father Dupuis, with three companions, was sent by the sea and river route to Timbuctoo. They arrived in May, 1895. The mission with its infirmary was successful. Dupuis, who had been solidly trained in languages, including Arabic, from the first "took" strongly with the peoples of Timbuctoo. Also, the city, which—according to tradition—has taken many captive, took hold on Dupuis. Past question, he violated his vows in intimacies with its bold, lighthearted, froward women, who have been notorious for their confident manners since the times of Ibn Batouta and Leo Africanus.

Otherwise, he might have expected ecclesiastical promotion, for his abilities were marked. But reports of his conduct brought determination on the part of the order to call him back to Algiers. According to the author, Dupuis spent an entire day shut in his room.

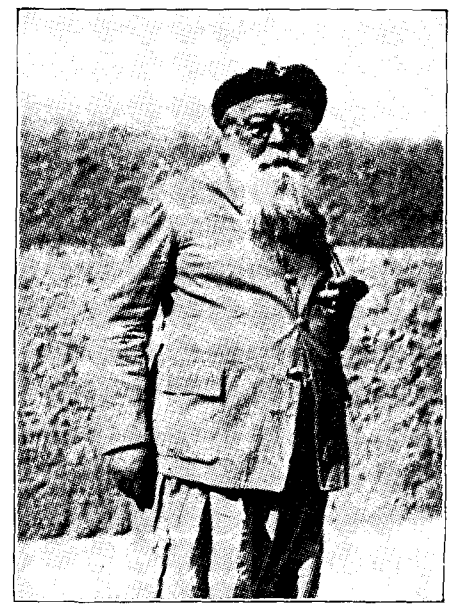
> Toward sunset he came out. He had stripped himself of his crucifix and robe. . . . He carried nothing in his hands, no sack, no bundle. "Adieu," he said to his gaping *confrères,* and walked out of the mission. He slept that night in one of the empty reed shelters for itinerant laborers of the humblest sort, and was seen next morning wading in the lagoon, still barehanded, catching crawfish for his breakfast.

The break with his profession was complete. He at once married (first by Mohammedan, then by civil law) Salama—a Peuhl woman of Kabara. She bore him fifteen children. The author gives their names and also the astonishing sequence in which they were born. Salama organized, and still rules, his household in Timbuctoo.

Undeniably such action is a sensational event in the history of a missionary order, and has provoked a thousand comments and innuendos which have found their way into the writings of travellers. When one records the simple facts, that is enough. But not for the author. With the ardor of a Freudian eroticist, he pursues Dupuis, returning for a second visit to Timbuctoo, to penetrate his story and unveil his errancy from the beginning. He takes advantage of friendship to draw forth confidences such as men make under bonds of intimacy. And he puts it in a book! It is not a fair book; it is not a likable book. By all the codes of masculine loyalty, it is not a permissible book. Furthermore, it is an exaggeration. The picture drawn is that of a lewd man and a drunkard. The writer of this review once travelled for some days in close companionship with Dupuis, and does not recall that he drank at all.

The irritation, however, is not all excited by extravagance and bad taste. The writer missed an opportunity. No one living knows the Sudan as does Dupuis. Its strange assortment and commingling of races, black and brown; its degenerated religious faiths; its tumultuous history; its triumphs (the greatest in the record of the Negro race); its varied languages: these are Dupuis's body of unique knowledge. And this knowledge will die with him. As the author asserts, he will not write of himself; neither will he now record any further fraction of what he knows. With the intimacy and half the persistence possessed by the author, he might have given us some of this lore accumulated by forty years of study and experience. But though he tells us that Dupuis is learned, he is not interested in his learning. He is only interested in the least profitable side of his subject's life—his adventures in sensuality. Even such an unusual experience as Dupuis's visit to the mid-Saharan mines of Taodeni, he tells poorly and inadequately. He could have taken down from Dupuis's own lips an account that would read like a romance.

We need a good book for general reading on the Sudan. It is one of the most remarkable frontiers of all human settlement—the frontier between the Black



THE WHITE MONK

race and the races of the Mediterranean. What Dupuis might have communicated would have been a book of delight and value.

As an appendix to the book, the author prints a number of short essays explanatory of the historical and ethnological problems of the Niger, and these are useful, though not original. Useful, too, is the inclusion of the drawings of Dupuis which he made to illustrate his brochure on the industries of Timbuctoo.

To his note on the "Tarik es Sudan" he might have added the information that this famous work has been obtainable for many years in the French translation of Professor Houdas.

Several of the photographs, apparently taken by the author, are valuable. That of Dupuis himself, which serves as frontispiece and which shows the old man in faded suit and absurd beret, with pipe between his fingers, is an excellent portrait.

* *

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An Epistle to the Americans

(*Continued from first page*)

civilization, and bourgeois civilization is in a state of decline." Mr. Strachey has the good sense or the good luck not to draw crudely the conclusion: *Therefore* contemporary literature is in a state of decline. But he comes very near doing so.

But the decline of bourgeois civilization, while it may fully account for, does not completely describe, the nature of contemporary literature. Conceiving the present state of society so completely in terms of a class struggle, Mr. Strachey finds it the easiest thing in the world to fit literature into the class struggle too. For all writers who are not communists are bourgeois or capitalists in their point of view, if not consciously then unconsciously. Mr. Strachey goes almost so far as to suggest that the more completely bourgeois a writer is the less is he likely to know, the less he knows the more likely is it that he is bourgeois. But more than that. Since it is a struggle to the death, and since fascism is the natural and desperate consequence of capitalism at bay (Mr. Strachey has really brilliantly demonstrated this in earlier books), so an un-

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conscious capitalist writer is an unconscious fascist writer. Mr. Archibald MacLeish, for instance, has "The Fascist Unconscious," a piece of new psychoanalysis borrowed from Michael Gold.

Now all this to the present writer seems, as they say in Mr. Strachey's country, going off the deep end. And going off with a vengeance. Either you are a communist writer or you are, the present terrible struggle being what it is, a bourgeois writer. And if you are a bourgeois writer you are, when you least know it, a fascist writer. The nostalgic regret and sadness of Proust, the hard-boiled nihilism of Hemingway, the "Modern Temper" despair of Joseph Wood Krutch, to take a few of Mr. Strachey's instances, are all functions of the decay of the capitalist system and in essence fascist reactions.

Now if this book were simply a homily delivered in private to a group of convinced Marxists, it might be an effective homily. For all the incidental insights in it, for all Mr. Strachey's admirable sensibility and occasional rapier thrusts in the best leisure class Oxford Union manner, it can hardly be taken seriously as an examination of the present social function or social conditioning and certainly not of the present esthetic function (probably the same as it was in the past or will be in the future) of literature.

The Spell of Querinda

DELAY IN THE SUN. By Anthony Thorne. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1934. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

A YOUNG Englishman, who is also part Irish and part French, went to Spain, fell in love with it, and has written a sort of "Grand Hotel" novel about it—that is, a novel about a group of variegated people all drawn together by a motor-bus strike in an out-of-the-way town in Spain. The principal people are English. The characterizations are extremely good and the relationships of the various people well analyzed. Before I go any farther I may mention that this novel is the Literary Guild choice for January, that the *London Evening Standard* has also chosen it for January, and that the English Book Society has made it its first recommendation. Therefore my praise of it is not particularly original.

One cannot, however, forebear to praise a book written with such naturalness, knowledge of the terrain, and sympathy and understanding for a variety of characters. We see, smell, taste, and feel the actual Spain, the heat of the noonday and the mystery of the night. From each traveller's point of view we perceive its influence. We are introduced to various Iberian minor characters, all racily convincing. The charm of the architecture, of church, market, inn, and wineshop, is constantly present, the scent of the flowers, the glare of the sun; and in this wholly convincing *milieu* we follow the changes that the lazy, dusty town works upon the stranded English, till the end of the bus-strike releases them again to go their peculiar ways.

As the middle-aged Englishman, Julian, says at the end of the book, to the aging Agnes who has lost her Cosby:

> "The first evening we stayed here, after John and I had left the seven other travellers at the hotel, it occurred to me that they—that we—are always in the middle of a sentence. At any point in life we are incomplete, we have not finished what we are going to say. But an unexpected semicolon there—a bus strike, Querinda—and the rest of the sentence might be quite different. Wasn't that clever of me?"

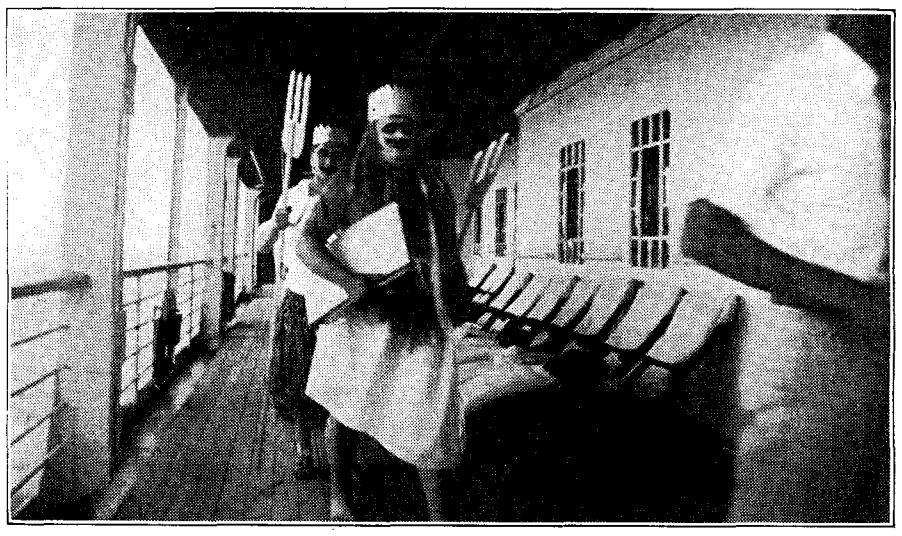
In truth it was quite clever of him. For almost every one's sentence does end differently from what he had imagined.

Anyone who is truly interested in the strangely interwoven lives of lugubrious human beings, must recognize the gift of a remarkable humanity in this young author; and his touch is always delicate and sure. I am not going to burst into paeans about this book. It deserves better than that. It is the kind of book one intends to tell one's best friends about, as a story the intelligent will enjoy. Mr. Thorne may do better; but he has certainly made a good start.

The Bowling Green

X. Crossing the Line

PROBABLY you had forgotten: we were speaking of Buenaventura. Sunday afternoon and a ship in port make a big social event. *Santa Maria* apparently stands treat to all the smart people of the countryside who motor in from outlying haciendas and swarm aboard for tea and cakes. They are mostly ladies, very brilliant of eye and brunette in tint, carrying a surcharge of Parisian perfume and a general impression of silk next the skin. They have their niñas with them, daintily dressed in white. The señor, if he accompanies, is likely to be stoutish and dressed in a cutaway coat. A quite different troupe was a party of Franciscan priests and pupils in brown robes and knotted clothesline girdles who tramped in careful inspection throughout the ship. One, seemingly in command, was magnificently tonsured. Down on the pier, defended from the gangway by some inscrutable social division, humble Buenaventurans in every shade of black and tan milled about as cheerful spectators. The ship's cadets were bartering cigarettes for green oranges. A small boy with two parrots on a stick kept crying *Loro!*



KING NEPTUNE (AND HIS DAUGHTER)

to explain his salable birds. A man clasped a kind of opossum to his bosom; a honey-bear, we were told. These creatures fascinated the Topside Lady, one of the passengers whom I rarely saw except sitting solitary on the boat deck with a dark lonely gaze and an air of emotional exhaustion. She was beset with desire to buy an animal of some sort, but ship's regulations always intervened. In Guayaquil she fell in love with a wildcat displayed on the hatch, and hopefully fondled it, but it chewed her hand smartly. Still she yearned for a pet, and some humorist informed her that the chief officer had a wildcat on the focsle head. Sure enough, she went up there to look for it, and Chips had to explain that the "wildcat" is the pawl on the windlass.

There were animals that had yearnings, too. A yellow dog sat all afternoon on the edge of the dock staring anxiously upward toward an after hatch where cargo was working. Trucks rumbled close upon her, great nets of goods swung over her devoted head, constantly she had to shift out of someone's way, but she never took her eyes off the ship. Presumably she had seen her divinity vanish into that hatch and with the whole passion of her soul she waited for him to reappear. Apparently he never did, at any rate not in the same place, for when the ship left at dusk she was still at bereaved and steadfast gaze. Dido, we called her.

Others also had been thinking of Buenaventura, for this very week picking up the *Nautical Gazette*, one of the few magazines I read regularly, I find an article by Mr. J. J. Collins on the construction of those new docks (finished in 1930) which I had admired. A tablet on the pier which I noted at the time says *Malecón de Buenaventura, obra iniciada por el General Alfredo Vasquez Cobo, Raymond Concrete Pile Co. Ingenieros-Contratistas.* The Raymond Company, I learn from Mr. Collins's article, had their difficulties. The drilling equipment had to be adjusted to a tidal variation of about 17 feet and piles weighing as much as 12 tons were to be placed at an angle of 30° from perpendicular. Bottom conditions were not uniform: in some places a pile would sink 20 feet by its own weight; elsewhere they had to drill through hardpan. The hands, recruited locally, were not familiar with this kind of work and "had to be entirely educated to it on the job." It is an excellent thing for the writer, grumbling at the task of putting a few words on paper, to remind himself that there are a lot of occupations that are really difficult. There is also an agreeable analogy in those piles. Often indeed the literary contractor, attempting to put down a line of thought, will find it drop out of sight through sentimental sludge; and again he will encounter the hardpan of the impossible.

That whole series of technical articles about South American ports and harbors, which the *Nautical Gazette* has been printing at intervals since last summer, is surely of great value to any whose trade lies in those directions.

⁂ ⁂

By some freak of chance the rain we expected in Buenaventura held off until just as we were leaving; it got busy in the evening however, as it had its daily inch to make up. (The annual rainfall there totals toward 400 inches; say over 30 feet, which even Noah would regard with respect.) It was a wet black night with glares of distant lightning as *Santa Maria* turned SW toward the coast of Ecuador. Looking back at the sprinkle of lights you might almost have thought there was a real town there. But the more you think about Buenaventura the easier it is to convince yourself it is a fantasy, a nightmare. The contrast between the Raymond Company's solid piers and that squalid huddle of human sties is too violent. Equally unbelievable is the new town hall now finishing in a vacant field —a solid chunk of modernistic concrete, preposterously Northamerican in plan, like a courthouse in Long Island City. Why not have used the beautiful and appropriate Spanish architecture?

That night as a treat for the children our goodnatured captain had ordered a Baked Alaska for us at dinner. It was a superb artistic contrast, for as we sat at luxury in the comfortable saloon one couldn't help wondering what they were eating in Buenaventura.

⁂ ⁂

The next morning was as different as possible. The air was fresh and dry, the sun brilliant. Far to leftward was a faint blue smudge of hilly coast. The big anticipation of the day was the Equator, for we would cross the line that afternoon. When I went up to the stem of the ship for my forenoon muse I noticed that the purser was in the smokeroom conspiring with a group of oldtimers, rehearsing the traditional rituals of King Neptune.

It was the best morning of the voyage. The tradewind was strong and sweet with an odd fragrance, almost like new-mown hay. It would have been interesting to consider that that lively air, moving from east to west, was the actual draught of earth's turning. Ocean, blue coastline, cordilleras and the sturdy *Maria* herself were all twirling eastward at the world's maximum velocity — about a thousand miles an hour. And that breeze I felt, as Jeans reminds us in his talks in *Through Space and Time,* was the slipback of the surrounding atmosphere, which cannot keep pace with earth's turning. It was the simplest proof of our rotation. But this is mere afterthought: I was then indisposed to thinking. It is good to be here was all I said to myself, dreaming in admiration of the flying fish which were bigger and more colorful than those of the Atlantic. Their wings were coppery or lavender, their tails longer: they have a skilful way of keeping themselves in air by flipping the long tail on the water which ticks them again upward. The shadows of great clouds made broad acres of purple and violet across the sea. *Santa Maria's* tall stem, quivering gently with the comfortable flexibility of a well-planned ship, moved strongly into the marbled blue. Looking over the starboard bow, so that the gaze follows the line of the morning sunlight, you can see how the water is laced and veined with brilliance, shimmers in planes of fracture like patterns in ice. Squads of yellow flying fish, with bodies of steel blue, burst up from right under her forefoot. Tilting themselves daintily on the invisible push of wind they sweep safely away. Others, keeping straight in line with our course, I suppose are eventually crushed—but it is interesting to think that all that empty-looking water beneath is one continual scurry of these darting forms, flickering out of our way. Here's a big lavender fellow — a beauty — with heart-stopping suddenness he flashes up under the boom of our great shearing wedge of steel—for a moment he keeps pace just ahead of the hissing crumble of sea—will he make it?—he flicks downward his long steering tail, which tosses him a little higher—he catches a gust in his gauzy membranes—gains speed and veers away in a long skimming swoop.

⁂ ⁂

At three in the afternoon less graceful creatures emerged from the deep. The greenhorns had prudently put on bathing suits to be hazed by Neptune and his court, variously accoutered as Barber, Doctor, Scribe, and attendant mermaids in rope-yarn hair. It would be contrary to the oath to reveal the details of the ceremonial; Mr. J. and the other oil-men from Talara were rigorous to carry through the traditional rituals and japes which are carefully preserved in a huge folder, together with the required regalia, in the storeroom of Fausto, the excellent deck steward. As usual, the neophytes being quite as numerous as the old-timers, there was suggested conspiracy to turn the tables upon the hazing party, but deference prevailed. However, after suffering plentiful emulsions of soap, paste, grease, ice water and what not, the awaited free-for-all eventually arrived. Neptune, who bore a close resemblance to burly Mr. O., the mining engineer from Chile, was respectfully saluted by a committee of the new initiates. In souvenir of the occasion, said they, a piece of the mystic Line itself was here for his acceptance. They held out a platter, lifted a silver dish cover, and revealed a tempting scroll. Neptune knew well there was some trick; with reluctance in his eyes he reached gingerly for it; the committee seized him and with one vast heave he also went swashing into the tank. His broad rope-ravelling beard and flowing robes floated wide on the smitten pool.

(To be continued)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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Authorship in Irving's Day

WASHINGTON IRVING—A Bibliography. Compiled by William R. Langfeld with the Bibliographic Assistance of Philip C. Blackburn. New York: The New York Public Library. 1934.

A DESCRIPTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITINGS OF JAMES FENIMORE COOPER. By Robert E. Spiller & Philip C. Blackburn. New York: R. R. Bowker Company. 1934.

Reviewed by STANLEY WILLIAMS

FROM the books under review much can be deduced of the problems confronting American writers between 1820 and 1860, and of the difficulties which helped to keep Irving abroad for seventeen years. Mr. Langfeld's book, the result of his many years of loving labor in his remarkable library of Irvingiana, is primarily a collector's bibliography. It contains highly analytical studies of first editions, unravelling skilfully, for example, the tangled skein of the separate issues of "The Sketch Book," and permitting identification, in a fashion hitherto impossible, of its variant copies. Similar complex problems are ingeniously reasoned and solved in the respect to other items. Thus the entire long section, the vertebræ of the book, devoted to the single issues of Irving's works, is of the utmost importance to the collector of Irvingiana, and of basic significance to the bibliography of American literature as a whole.

If the reader ponders on the reasons for Irving's publications either abroad or simultaneously here and abroad, he may find them admirably summarized in the able introduction to the Spiller-Blackburn bibliography of Cooper. Of value also to collectors, this bibliography is written distinctly to explain the conditions of publishing and authorship in the second quarter of the century. In other words (Mr. Spiller's) an intelligent study of these titles reveals much. Such an index

> reflects literary fashions in the decline of romanticism and the advent of the spirit of social reform; it reveals the highly unsatisfactory relationships between publisher, editor, author, and reader which handicapped our literary development for so many years; it makes its contribution to the first chapter in the history of international copyright law, still unfinished in so far as America is concerned; and it provides data upon which to determine the state of the public taste at home, as well as the popular attitude abroad toward the culture of the infant republic.

Such evidence becomes articulate by grouping and listing under fifty-two separate titles (besides collected works, contributions to periodicals, attributions, etc.) the early editions until about 1850 of Cooper's works in both English and foreign languages. Thus each bibliography reaches both collector and literary historian.

What, then, is the story which can be recreated from the publishing experiences of Irving and Cooper? The slow growth of American literature is commonly ascribed to cultural mediocrity, to absorption in business and politics, to dearth of indigenous talent. No one will deny the existence of these factors, but there were also others, which made Irving remark to James Pendleton Kennedy that writing, after all, in America, was "a gentleman's avocation." He was thinking of an obstacle which almost certainly deterred many Americans of talent from electing writing as a profession. He was thinking, partly, of the obstacles impeding American writers through the lack of international copyright. Mr. Spiller recapitulates the situation in his introduction:

> The American copyright law of 1790 was explicit. An American author could copyright his book in the United States regardless of the date of publication elsewhere, but authors who were not citizens of the United States were allowed no protection whatever. The only determining factor was citizenship, although prompt copyright entry was a valuable protection against pirates. The English law was vague in its statement of its protection for the work of aliens. A revision in 1838 did not clarify this point materially, and the rights of English publishers rested in a series of favorable court decisions until the House of Lords decided in 1854, in the case of *Jeffreys vs. Boosey*, that there existed under the law no such protection. The determining factor during Cooper's lifetime was prior publication in England. Citizenship had nothing to do with the problem, for any author, whether English or not, could obtain protection in England by announcing his book there before its appearance in any other country.

Such were the laws, or such was the absence of them, which created the two aspects of the story, the American and the European. The American story may be divided, with Cooper's writing as an illustration, roughly into three epochs. The first, extending in Cooper's career from "The Spy" (1821) to "Wyandotte" (1843) was the period of the linen-bound two-volume editions, which sold at about one dollar a volume, in fierce competition with pirated English authors. The second period, which continued until about the publication of "The Sea Lions" (1849), was that of the two-volume paper-bound editions at twenty-five cents a volume, yielding the American author even less income. In both these periods Cooper usually owned the plates and negotiated with the publishers for an edition of a definite size. The third period was that of the fine single volume in cloth, but the full effects of this change Cooper did not live long enough really to enjoy. When such traditions flourished in the publishing world, one may begin to understand why Cooper and Irving staked their literary futures in the European market.

Cooper's adjustment to these exigencies Mr. Spiller discusses in his introduction, so clearly that this is likely to remain a source for later historians of copyright. It is pertinent, I think, to add complementary facts, never before compiled, concerning Irving's adaptation to the same emergencies which challenged Cooper. From boyhood, Irving, who, unlike his rival, had resolved at the age of twenty-one to become a writer, had been reluctantly trained in the warfare engendered by the unjust copyright systems of the two countries. We find him as early as 1813 striving to aid Thomas Campbell to secure copyright for a book to be published at the same time in England and America. Four years later, while forming, as a means of livelihood, a plan for the republication in America of selected English books, he commented on the fact that Moore's "Lalla Rookh" bestowed no American profits on its author because of two or three rival editions in the United States. Irving's control over the irritating situation was more immediate than Cooper's. He wrote "The Sketch Book" under the bayonet of necessity, and soon perceived that if writing for bread and butter was to be his trade, he must learn the rules of the game. This he did so thoroughly, that soon after the success of "The Sketch Book" he was regarded in America as having acquired a mysterious sesame to cold doors of English publishers.

In 1819, when completing "The Sketch Book," he had learned much, but was learning more. "I wish," he wrote Brevoort, as he forwarded the manuscript to New York,

> the copyright secured for me, and the work printed and then sold to one or more booksellers, who will take the whole impression at a fair discount, and give cash or good notes for it. This makes short work of it, and is more profitable to the author than selling the copyright.

He next learned the lesson of the price paid by the American author for success. English magazines and booksellers instantly set out to pirate his delightful essays. He had not intended publication in England, but the sting of such thefts sent him to Murray and other publishers. To anticipate and thwart the pirates, he was forced to publish an English edition of "The Sketch Book" with John Miller, at his own expense. The only weapon, this he now learned, against such robberies, was simultaneous publication in both countries.

From now on Irving adhered meticulously to this rule of the game. If in England, he sent manuscript or sheets to America; if in America, as in the years in which he wrote his Western books, he reversed the process, and forwarded material to England. His schemes for proper timing of publication at home and abroad were integral struggles in his battle for fame, with the victories, for the most part, on his side. To his grief, a spurious edition of "Salmagundi" appeared in London in 1824, but "Bracebridge Hall" (1822) and "Tales of a Traveller" shaved this international dating to a nicety, the latter appearing on August 25, 1824, in London and in New York precisely one day earlier. Even before he had written a line of the "Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus" (1828) Irving exhorted the painter, C. R. Leslie, then acting as his agent in England:

> *Whichever bookseller you make an arrangement with, get him to announce the work at once as preparing for publication by me.*

Irving's italics reflect his aggressive management of such problems. Although in isolated Spain, he sent proof sheets of the English edition of this book to America as fast as they fell from the press. Such precautions, to say nothing of his two years of intense toil in Madrid, would seem to entitle Irving to the natural rewards of his labors. But not so, had he not been wary. The anxieties of an author a century since may be comprehended from the incident following hard upon the publication of his great four-volume work. For he learned almost at once that an anonymous brigand in America was preparing an abridgment for the lazy reader. Irving's exhaustion vanished in anger. Down he sat and in nineteen days' tremendous effort composed the four hundred pages of his own abridgment. Come what would, he would defeat this "paltry poacher." Is it strange that humble American writers, without Irving's powerful European connections and without his numerous outposts and scouts, should hesitate to enter this merciless competition?

Apart from the effort to maintain double copyrights, Cooper and Irving lost much time and patience in arranging terms of publication, in defining the author's share of the profits of his work, in fine, in arguing about problems which today are ordinarily settled by brief discussions and a few strokes of the pen. It would be salutary for today's aggrieved authors to read Walter Scott's candid letter to Irving (Edinburgh, December 4, 1819) on conditions in the book trade, in which he declares that, arrange matters as you will, the bookseller "contrives to take the lion's share of the booty." Sometimes the copyright was, of course, sold outright. In 1827 Irving offered that of the "Columbus" to John Murray for three thousand guineas. A more common method, however, was called publication upon shares.

> The mode of doing so [wrote Irving] . . . is to agree about the number of copies in an edition, and the retail price to be placed upon them; to multiply the number of copies by the price of each and divide the gross amount by six. For this sixth part, the publisher to give his notes to the author.

Such was Irving's arrangement with Murray for the English edition of the "Columbus"; for the American, the Carvills, then the most prominent publishers in New York,

> agreed to give seven thousand dollars for the two thousand copies in sheets, one thousand dollars on delivery, the remainder in four, six, and nine months.

At other times the copyright was leased for a period of years; or the author managed the stereotyping; or he bought the stereotype plates from his publisher; or he published at his own expense, receiving a premium. But whatever the method, Irving wrote, "there is always a chance for competition and piracy." These confused, unequal methods had their roots somehow in their fundamental injustice, the lack of copyright law. In his later years Irving, interested, though he could not understand Edgar Allan Poe, in the younger writers, saw the handicaps which had beset him cramping the new generation. "How much," he said, in 1840,

> this growing literature may be retarded by the present state of our copyright law, I had recently an instance, in the cavalier treatment of a work of merit, written by an American, who had not yet established a commanding name in the literary market. I undertook, as a friend, to dispose of it for him, but found it impossible to get an offer from any of principal publishers. They even declined to publish at the author's cost, alleging that it was not worth their while to trouble themselves about native works, of doubtful success, while they could pick and choose among the successful works daily poured out by the British press, *for which they had nothing to pay for copyright.* This simple fact spoke volumes to me, as I trust it will do to all who peruse these lines.

It was the old story of his youth, but worse now, for as the worth of American literature had increased, so had piracy in England of American books. "The poison chalice returned!" said the *New York Mirror*. In addition, that phase of the English copyright law which extended a nebulous protection to aliens, had been challenged. In 1851 Richard Bentley planned suit for alleged infringement by Bohn of the copyright of Irving's works. The old confusion reigned. In the files of John Murray's office in Albemarle Street is a curious autobiography of Irving written at Murray's suggestion to prove that by his ancestry and by his many years abroad he was virtually an Englishman, and thus entitled to British copyright!

This presents but the briefest outline of a condition of literary history which has had unquestionably a demonstrable influence upon American literature. The extent of this influence is admirably suggested by these two bibliographies. Let us some day, abandoning temporarily the tall discussions of deism, or democracy, explore more fully this unromantic but powerful hindrance to nineteenth century American letters.

Stanley Williams is professor of English at Yale University, an editor of The New England Quarterly, *and editor of numerous books by Irving.*

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BECOMING A WRITER

HARCOURT, BRACE & COMPANY

Letters to the Editor

(*Continued from page* 396)

and poetry suitable to the reading age, not the chronological age, of youth. . . . The high school fails to do this because too largely students therein must read college entrance prescriptions. . . . The college fails to do this because its courses are too traditionalized in both content and method.

The second reason that comes to my mind is epitomized in the saying, "You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink.". . .

EDWIN B. RICHARDS.

Easton, Pa.

Will Take Fifty Years

SIR:—Four causes, the Civil War and the consequent ignoring of local and regional aptitudes under the drive of successful mass-industrialism, the uprise of the one-track type of mind—inventor, financier, industrial pioneer—as the ideal American human being, the widespread belief (suitable to the Protestant mentality) that the literary artist was a "bohemian" and a bad citizen, and the substitution of athletics for learning in the colleges did the trick of making the American public book-shy. Nor has the belated attempt of the last twenty years to

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change this state of affairs improved matters much. . . .

The remedy for this state of things rests not on any single class, but on the whole American people at large—writers, publishers, reviewers, and readers. Let me suggest what now can be done:

1. The reviewers and the publishers must both learn that no book can be made popular by merely ballyhooing it into popularity. . . .

2. The desire to read must be stimulated in the American people, not from metropolitan centres such as New York and Chicago, but slowly and painstakingly from within the country itself. . . .

3. Local and regional cultures must be fostered and protected. . . .

4. There is reason to think that Europe is not likely to give us many more masterpieces in the future. Why import trash then?

5. If these suggestions are followed it is quite probable that we will some day have a reading public who will demand good books. But let us not be in a hurry about it. To create such a thing will take at least fifty years. . . .

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

Little Rock, Arkansas.

"Social Obligation"

SIR:—It is necessary to pass four years imbibing the tenets of numerous textbooks and then one may turn forever from the printed page. During that time one has spanned the universe of knowledge and now must set out to gain life's real objective, for which the preceding four years was a period of acquiring all the book learning that existed. . . . This is the common idea of education. This fundamental misconception that the colleges have allowed to remain extant is part of the cause for the apathy of the general "education" public for reading. . . .

Another part of the conglomerate cause for the lack of reading by "the educated public, with money enough and what is more important leisure enough, to read" is the excessive ballyhoo given to a certain percentage of published works that creates an environment of fashion in the world of books. The publisher's blurbs and the hurried comments of countless daily reviewers have fostered this environment until the reading of particular volumes has become a "social obligation." . . .

There are many genuine readers who complain that the retail prices of books are too high. For most of the prospective buyers of books this is true but it is only one side of the impasse. How is the publisher to carry on at lower prices? Public and lending libraries have been and continue to be of great aid to these impecunious readers but the libraries do not allay their desire to possess their own books nor do they adequately substitute for the sense of fitness and satisfaction that becomes manifest when one is surrounded by his own filled shelves.

Schenectady, N. Y. P. K. FODDER.

Not Interested

SIR:—The reason that the average North American does not read books, any books, is because he is not interested in his inner welfare, his soul, his mind, his libido, or, as he would say, his what have you. He is, and almost always has been, interested in trying to make money with which to purchase material things. . . . I have in my family a superintendent of schools, and in his large house where I spent a few days last summer I could not find a solitary volume other than sample textbooks; the tools of his job of making money. . . .

Evanston, Ill. R. D. BURGE.

People Do Read

SIR:—Answering your editorial as to why people don't read more. They do. But they don't *buy* the modern books because they can get them at the lending libraries and also because the public is blurb-shy. These two reasons answer your question.

I have a third reason, but am almost afraid to advance it, as I fear the effect on the editorial chair when you return to it from your rise into the stratosphere.

If you insist, however, it is because readers prefer the old masters to the modern trash. For it *is* trash compared to the characterization of Dickens, the philosophy of Wells, the vividness of Kipling, and the style of Stevenson.

The moderns will be of interest only to the historian of the future, as they will give him a cross-section of the modes and manners of the present day. Would that they wouldn't!

GEO. P. BISSELL.

Philadelphia, Pa.

The New Books

Biography

MENDELSSOHN AND HIS FRIENDS IN KENSINGTON: Letters from Fanny and Sophy Horsley, Written 1833-1836. *Edited by Rosamund Brunel Gotch. Oxford University Press.* 1934. $5.

These letters, written by two young girls of a London suburban family at the outset of the Victorian age, give a delightful introduction to the cultural life of the English upper middle class a century ago. The family knew Mendelssohn well (he was only twenty-four, but he was, of course, already celebrated) and they saw a good deal of him on his frequent visits to London. The record is one of parties, concerts, conversations; every anecdote is trivial in itself, but put together they provide perfect source material for a later Jane Austen. These few lines are characteristic:

> On entering the room we found seated Klingemann and Mendelssohn looking very cross. He sat in deep glumps and sighs all the time till he went, and then went on apologizing in a mumbling tone for nearly ten minutes when he took his leave, Klingemann in high spirits as a matter of course, for with them it is a rule that when one rides the other falls. They did not stay long as they had a cab waiting at the door to take them to Vauxhall to bathe, nasty indecent creatures I think to mention a word about it, but men are sad dirty pigs after all.

In spite of the title, the interest of these letters is not in Mendelssohn but in Fanny and Sophy Horsley. Readers of "Julia Newberry's Diary," which had a vogue a year ago, will find much the same quality here.

G. S.

Drama

THE BEST PLAYS OF 1933-34. *Edited by Burns Mantle. Dodd, Mead.* 1934. $3.

Mr. Mantle began these year-books fifteen years ago. This large volume contains surveys of the past season in New York, in Chicago, in San Francisco, and in Southern California. Then we have the abbreviated versions of the plays Mr. Mantle chooses from the season of 1933-34 as the best. They are: "Mary of Scotland," "Men in White," "Dodsworth," "Ah, Wilderness!," "They Shall Not Die," "Her Master's Voice," "No More Ladies," "Wednesday's Child," "The Shining Hour," and "The Green Bay Tree." After that we have some notes on the authors of these plays, followed by a long list of the other plays produced in New York in the same season, with their casts. After some notes on Puppet Shows, etc., we have a statistical summary of last season plays which ended runs after June 17, 1933, and another of long runs on Broadway to June 16, 1934. "Another Language," including the original run, ran 433 performances, "Music in the Air," ran 342, and "One Sunday Afternoon" 322. "Abie's Irish Rose" and "Lightnin'" lead for previous runs, the former exceeding the latter by over twelve hundred performances. Then come Pulitzer Prize Winners and previous volumes of best plays, and then the birth dates of actors and actresses. This is followed by a necrology, an index of authors, and an index of plays and casts. Mr. Mantle's is an established reference book, and you should not expect more from it than that. It is pretty stereotyped by this time but has a library value.

W. R. B.

Fiction

PATTERNS OF WOLFPEN. By Harlan Hatcher. Bobbs-Merrill. 1934. $2.50.

This book gives a picture of a certain peculiarly American society, that of the pioneers who had been settled long enough to have conquered the wilderness, and not quite long enough to have been themselves conquered by civilization. For his place, Wolfpen, Mr. Hatcher has taken the name of a valley and mill near Louisville, where the last Kentucky wolves were driven and killed, and given it to a similar valley farther east, farther from cities. Here Saul Pattern came in 1785, and here for a hundred years the Patterns have lived, raising almost all their own necessities, trading with the world once or twice a year, living a large, free, life, with enough fertile farm-land to give to each son as he marries, and beside that thousands of acres of useless woodland—"just to look at and have around them." It is the life of the noble savage, redeemed from savagery; and it existed.

But it no sooner came to flowering than it was attacked by the industrial invasion. Mr. Hatcher shows his self-sufficient community at almost its last possible year, 1885. Sparrel Pattern, following the family tradition of leaving the patrimony better than one received it, puts in a steam mill; and his daughter Cynthia wonders why she should dread it. Much of the book is made up of Cynthia's sensitive, poetic musings, in which she feels more than she can explain. The justification of her fears soon follows; the shoddy entrepreneur who persuades Pattern to sell his timber, and brings in his own men to fell it, and they in turn bring sickness and violence into the valley of the Golden Age. The violence, however, is carefully delayed, and when it comes is muted; Cynthia, in whom we are most interested, has a happy ending, and even Wolfpen may go on, if not quite as before, still as a good life. That is to say, the author has done all he can to soften the conflict in his book. He might have made his book more dramatic, but to do so would have made it less idyllic; and it was the idyll of this people that he wished to write. His writing has learned much from Miss Elizabeth Madox Roberts, and has learned it well; his book gives us a beautiful, a little known, a truly native pattern of life.

B. D.

EDITOR'S CHOICE. By Alfred Dashiell. Putnams. 1934. $3.

Mr. Dashiell is managing editor of *Scribner's Magazine,* and nine of these stories are chosen from among those originally printed in that periodical. The stories by Thomas Wolfe, William Faulkner, Robert Nathan, Evelyn Scott, Jo Pagano, and Marlise Johnston have not, he says, yet appeared elsewhere in book form. To the previous publishers of other stories he gives credit, for those that he prints by Ernest Hemingway, Langston Hughes, Kay Boyle, Scott Fitzgerald, Anton Chekhov, N. Liashko, Ambrose Bierce, Guy de Maupassant, O. Henry, and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. First in the book come Mr. Dashiell's own "Notes on Reading, Writing and Editing," which will show you the plan of his exhibits, and what, from a magazine editor's viewpoint, he thinks that good short stories are. The book ought to be valuable to young writers as collateral reading, and perhaps might do for classrooms too. Mr. Dashiell's approach is individual and what he has to say about fiction, as he has experienced it over an editorial desk, is worth reading.

W. R. B.

THE PROUD SERVANT. By Margaret Irwin. Harcourt, Brace. 1934. $2.50.

Margaret Irwin has the enviable talent of bringing history to rich, vivid life; hers is the keen analytical brain of the historian coupled with the imaginative vigor of the true teller of tales. The publication of "Royal Flush" (an earlier novel) made it patent that here was a writer with ability to penetrate the mists of the past; under her skilful guidance we were able to realize characters formerly consigned to the gloom and dust of our school-day history books, in all the eloquence of dynamic humans moving in a valid, temporal world. This latest novel maintains the same high level of artistic excellence.

It is the story of a hero, the saga of an honest man caught up in the toils of petty bickering and the vacillations of a King. The man was James Graham, Marquis of Montrose; Charles I was the King—their story is the oft-repeated one of the beautiful dog and the ugly master. Charles I, with his prayer books, his bishops, his parliaments, seems singularly unworthy of the devotion paid him by his Proud Servant. That Montrose was able to "raise Scotland for the King" moves the reader less than the knowledge that a pure, undefiled man walks through the pages of this book—just as he did in Scotland in the seventeenth century—a servant proud in the mastery of himself and his destiny.

K. P.

Latest Books Received

BELLES LETTRES

Gulliver's Travels, and Selected Prose and Poetry. J. Swift. Random. $3.50. *Introductions.* Collected by T. J. Wise. New York: W. H. Smith, Jr., 9 East 57th Street. *Opinions: Literary and Otherwise.* H. W. Taft. Macmillan. $2.

BIOGRAPHY

Viscount Grey of Fallodon. Politicus. London: Methuen. *Courageous Women.* L. M. Montgomery, M. Keith, and M. B. McKinley. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart. *William Warde Fowler.* R. H. Coon. Oxford Univ. Pr. *Israfel.* H. Allen. Farrar. $3.50.

DRAMA

The Wilderness Edition of the Plays of Eugene O'Neill. Random. 2 vols. *Plays of American Life.* F. Eastman. French. $2.50.

ECONOMICS

Union-Management Coöperation in the "Stretch Out." R. C. Nyman in collaboration with E. D. Smith. Yale Univ. Pr. $3.

EDUCATION

Modern Methods in the Church School. W. Grime. Round Table Pr. $1.50. *Narrative Technique.* T. H. Uzzell in collaboration with C. W. Uzzell. Harcourt. $2.50. *Social and Religious Problems of Young People.* S. A. Weston and S. R. Harlow. Abingdon. $1.75. *The Relations of Learning.* W. B. Bizzell. Univ. of Oklahoma Pr. $2.50. *Redirecting Education. Vol. I. The United States.* Ed. R. G. Tugwell. Columbia Univ. Pr. $3. *Parent and Child.* E. Schmiedler and M. R. McDonough. Appleton. $2.25.

FOREIGN

Gleichnisse der Landschaft. A. Margul-Sperber. Storsjineti, Rumania: The Author.

HISTORY

Mother Lode. L. J. Stellman. Wagner. $2.50. *The New Haven Colony.* I. MacB. Calder. Yale Univ. Pr. $3.50. *French Revolution.* E. L. Woodward. Oxford Univ. Pr. $3. *Ladies in Revolt.* A. Graham. Womans Pr.

MISCELLANEOUS

Gracian's Manual. Trans. M. Fischer. Baltimore: Thomas. *Rocky Mountainania.* H. S. Peters. Denver, Colo.: Peters. *The Conquest of Suffering.* R. Calder. London: Methuen. *The Personal Secretary.* F. G. Nichols. Harvard Univ. Pr. $2. *Fun with Flutes.* D. Dushkin. Univ. of Chicago Pr. $1.50. *Creators of Wonderland.* M. Mespoulet. Arrow. $3. *Decoration.* S. M. Lockwood. Doubleday. $3.50. *Story of the Spanish Missions of the Middle Southwest.* F. C. Lockwood. Santa Ana, Calif.: Fine Arts Pr. *The Vitamin B Requirement of Man.* G. R. Cowgill. Yale Univ. Pr. $4. *The Rise and Destiny of the German Jew.* J. R. Marcus. Cincinnati: Union of American Hebrew Congregations. *The Money Supply of the American Colonies Before* 1720. C. P. Nettels. Madison, Wis. *Fascism and Citizenship.* G. Norlin. Univ. of North Carolina Pr. $1. *Basic Economics.* J. G. Evans. Univ. of North Carolina Pr. $1.50. *Catholics, Jews and Protestants.* C. E. Silcox and G. M. Fisher. Harpers. $2.50. *Divine White Right.* T. Bowen. Harpers. $1.75. *The Facts of Life in Popular Song.* S. Spaeth. Whittlesey. $1.50. *Your Carriage Madam!* J. Lane. Wiley. $1.75. *Women Workers Through the Depression.* L. Pruette. Macmillan. $2. *Psychic Phenomena of Jamaica.* J. J. Williams. Dial. $2.50. *The Physical and Mental Growth of Prematurely Born Children.* Univ. of Chicago Pr. $5. *The Adolescent in the Family.* Appleton. $3. *The Mystery Chef's Own Cook Book.* Longmans. $3. *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America. Vol.* 28. *Part II.* Univ. of Chicago Pr. $2. *The Puritans and Music.* P. A. Scholes. Oxford Univ. Pr. $8.50.

RELIGION

Quiet Hints to Ministers' Wives. F. S. Elson. Stratford. $1. *Religion and Relations.* B. Larsen. Stratford. $1.50. *God.* J. E. Boodin. Macmillan. $2. *Three Interpretations of the Universe. Vol. I.* J. E. Boodin. Macmillan. $3.

REPRINTS

Hamlet. Ed. J. D. Wilson. Cambridge Univ. Pr. Macmillan. $2.50. *Virgil's Works.* Trans. J. W. Mackail. Modern Library. 95 cents.

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A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

"I am making a study," writes F. R. S. of Brooklyn, *"of female delinquency, and would value suggestions as to appropriate readings in the field of sociology, and also in literature."*

I DON'T quite know what F. R. S. wishes to imply by her reference to the field of literature unless she means fiction. And if that is what she does intend I think it would be wiser for her to keep that part of her investigation quite apart from the other, as one is a scientific study of causes and conditions and the other attacks from the psychological and emotional end. Seldom does a question come so exactly with a book to answer it as this of F. R. S.'s, for Knopf not long ago brought out what is in all probability the most authoritative work on the subject yet to have been published: FIVE HUNDRED DELINQUENT WOMEN, by Dr. Sheldon Glueck, professor of criminology at the Harvard Law School, and Eleanor T. Glueck, research assistant at that School. Only last week in these columns Austin MacCormick, Commissioner of Correction of New York City, writing of the scepticism with which practical criminologists regard the work of the theoreticians, made an exception in favor of Eleanor Glueck. For this book the Gluecks have drawn upon investigations carried on for over three years, and have applied the case method to their findings. Their report goes into the social control of the sex impulse, into correctional treatment, into the technique of predicting the behavior of ex-offenders, etc. Even the person as completely ignorant as myself of the methodology of such work found that a hasty glance at the pages of the book woke a thousand queries as to the incidence of life on women unfortunately placed in society. It is, however, for the student of criminology and psychology and not for the layman that the book is intended.

NOVELS OF PIONEER LIFE

L. E. H. of Troy, Ala., would like to find a novel of pioneer life dealing with each of three Southern states, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Virginia. She says that Stark Young's SO RED THE ROSE (Scribners) is just what she wants for Mississippi, so that leaves two. Elizabeth Madox Roberts's THE GREAT MEADOW (Viking) ought to do the trick for Virginia, for though it moves over the mountains into Kentucky afterwards, it starts in the Old Dominion and gives a vivid picture of what pioneer life there was. And certainly existence of the sort is little to be envied, picturesque though it may seem when viewed at a distance of time. As for Tennessee the very novel that L. E. H. needs is to be found in John P. Fort's STONE DAUGHERTY (Dodd, Mead), a lusty tale, full of brawls, eye-gouging, and good, sturdy spirit on the part of the Scotch-Irish settlers of Tennessee.

STEVENSON BIOGRAPHY

A. P. of Cambridge, Mass., *wishes a biography of Robert Louis Stevenson to add to her shelves, and wants also suggestions for a book on philology written for a lay student.*

I answer the second part of her question first because it gives me an opportunity to print a letter from Edward Delavan Perry which he sent for the benefit of *C. P. H. of Lansing, Kansas,* who asked for similar information not long since. Mr. Perry presents his list as follows:

"Kent, R. G. LANGUAGE AND PHILOLOGY. Boston, 1923. (In the series: 'Our Debt to Greece and Rome,' but by no means exclusively devoted to ancient languages. A very good and concise little work.) Sturtevant, E. H. LINGUISTIC CHANGE. Chicago, 1917. Oertel, H. LECTURES ON THE SCIENCE OF LANGUAGE. New York, 1901. (In the series 'Yale Bicentennial Publications.') Jespersen, Otto. GROWTH AND STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. Leipzig, 1912. By the same author, LANGUAGE, ITS NATURE, DEVELOPMENT, AND ORIGIN. New York, 1922. All of Jespersen's work is of the highest class. Two very old works by William Dwight Whitney will always be useful: LANGUAGE AND THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE, and LIFE AND GROWTH OF LANGUAGE — although much progress in linguistic science has been made since they were first published."

Now for the Stevenson. Probably the most satisfactory life of R. L. S. for A. P.'s purposes is Graham Balfour's, published by Scribners. This is a work of many years' standing, however, and ought really to be supplemented by a study of more recent sort. George S. Hellman's THE TRUE STEVENSON—A STUDY IN CLARIFICATION (Little, Brown), though the critics found much fault with some of its deductions, embodies the results of recent research.

Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

☞The astute Ted Holliday calls David Frome's *Mr. Pinkerton Finds a Body* "the best detective novel since *The Nine Tailors.*" Our own choice for the year's runner-up is Rex Stout's *Fer de Lance.* We were troubled by the motivation in *Mr. Pinkerton;* and the passage on page 303 (inserted for the American edition?) did not clear things up for us. ☞The speediest publishing of the year seems to have been the job done by Macmillan and Michael T. Florinsky on *The Saar Struggle.* Mr. Florinsky arrived in America October 1, wrote the book in a month; Macmillan published ten days after they received the MS. ☞And certainly one of the best advertising jobs we've seen is the circular Dodd, Mead made up for *The Home Book of Quotations.* They've put into sixteen pages all the information you could want about Burton Stevenson's 2634-page anthology; if you can read the circular and then not buy the book, you've got abnormal sales resistance.

☞Lippincott, *Mystery Magazine,* Harrap (London publisher), and the London *Daily Mail* offer a prize of $7,500 for a detective novel with a crook character who can compare with Raffles, Arsène Lupin, and The Lone Wolf. Manuscripts must be in by May 31, 1935. It's a bright idea, but are we alone in the suspicion that the popularity of crooks passed out with repeal? ☞Doubleday, Doran announce the birth of Heyday House, a department to be directed by Jerome S. ("Mental Whoopee") Meyers, to publish puzzles, party games, and, we gather from the name of the outfit, other cute tricks. ☞Also from Doubleday comes the news that they will publish on January 11 *The American Diplomatic Game,* by Drew Pearson and Constantine Brown. "It tells," says the Doubleday announcement, "how the original draft of the Kellogg Pact was scribbled on the back of an old envelope . . . why Stimson declined to let Mussolini come to Washington, and scores of other unknown incidents in 'the diplomatic game.'" ☞Does it also tell why the first announcement of this book—a double-page spread in the November 17 *Publishers' Weekly*—appeared over the Harper imprint?

☞All the Quercuses have been pondering the best design and motto for medals for two supreme SRL subscribers—a gold one for F. A. Smerling of Park Avenue, New York City, who sent in fifteen Christmas subscriptions, and a silver one for B. E. Clark of South Bend, Indiana, who ran a close second with thirteen. Happy New Year to all thirty!

HARPER
Prize Novel Contest

Manuscripts may now be submitted for the Harper Prize Novel Contest. The final date for submission is February 1st, 1935 A circular giving full details of the contest will be mailed free on request

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The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

SINCE there are no detective novels published this week, the Criminal Record takes the opportunity to recapitulate the thirteen books (appropriate number) which have had the highest rating in this department in 1934. *They are listed in order of publication.*

THE THIN MAN. *By Dashiell Hammett.* Knopf, $2. (*Reviewed January* 13.)

THE CASE OF THE LUCKY LEGS. *By Erle Stanley Gardner.* Morrow, $2. (*Reviewed February* 10.)

THE NINE TAILORS. *By Dorothy L. Sayers.* Harcourt, Brace, $2. (*Reviewed March* 24.)

THE PLAGUE COURT MURDERS. *By Carter Dickson.* Morrow, $2. (*Reviewed June* 2.)

SHADOW ON THE WALL. *By H. C. Bailey.* Crime Club, $2. (*Reviewed June* 9.)

OUT WENT THE TAPER. *By R. C. Ashby.* Macmillan, $2. (*Reviewed July* 21.)

HEARKEN TO THE EVIDENCE. *By H. Russell Wakefield.* Doubleday, Doran, $2. (*Reviewed September* 15.)

CRIME ON THE SOLENT. *By Freeman Wills Crofts.* Dodd, Mead, $2. (*Reviewed September* 22.)

THE CASINO MURDER CASE. *By S. S. Van Dine.* Scribners, $2. (*Reviewed October* 6.)

DEATH WEARS A PURPLE SHIRT. *By R. C. Woodthorpe.* Crime Club, $2. (*Reviewed October* 13.)

FER-DE-LANCE. *By Rex Stout.* Farrar & Rinehart, $2. (*Reviewed October* 27.)

THE LINE-UP. *By Helen Reilly.* Crime Club, $2. (*Reviewed November* 17.)

MR. PINKERTON FINDS A BODY. *By David Frome.* Farrar & Rinehart, $2. (*Reviewed December* 8.)

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PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Advertisements must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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PUBLISHERS' Reading Wanted—Expert advice and editorial opinions. Mansfield.

WAYFARER: Where have you been all this time? I've been looking for you! Write first, please,—won't you? to Alison.

The ANDANTES, whose musical fellowship was started through this column a year ago, wish "HAPPY NEW YEAR" to the Saturday Review and to all the Columnyists. They hope Santa Claus brought the tenor for the Amateur Mixed Quartet! "Andante."

A FASCINATING HOBBY. Collect programs of famous old playhouses, including Booth's Theatre, Tony Pastor's, Koster and Bial's, Union Square Theatre, etc. $2.75 per dozen, or 50 for $10. No two alike. Guaranteed satisfactory. James Madison, 1376 Sutter St., San Francisco, Cal.

GENTLEMAN from San Francisco desires correspondence with a lady, age 25-35. Pursuit political science, literature, music, art. Box 327, Berkeley, Calif.

PHILADELPHIA WOMAN wants sociable acquaintance with masculine, entertaining man, 40-50. No impecunious philanderers. Box 162-A.

SOCIETY IS SHAM, the supposed real joys of life a ridiculous illusion. Life may be a bowlfull of cherries, but why should they all be green or rotten? Where oh where in the big haystack can a cynical young prospective millionaire find a needle sharp of wit, broad of mind, charming of manner, attractive in appearance and fond of everything genuine. No circus girls, Indians, opportunists, communists, Hebrews. Lusus Naturae.

WANTED, BACHELOR—Gentile, personable, well-educated, intelligent, interesting—travel, music, languages, theatre, movies, books, walking, fireside conversation, an occasional kitchenette dish with congenial friends. BY LADY—Single, 38, qualifications as above, good family, nice home, good position, many friends, girls and men her age, but seeking friendship of gentleman 40-50, appreciating sincere companionship, and with a sense of humor! NOT WANTED—High-brow, drink-jazz-bridge type!! Box 163-A.

HAWAII PRIMARY TEACHER (white) desires Eastern exchange position. Box 164-A.

PHYSICIAN, 34, Christian, interested in theater, motoring, literature, wishes correspondence of young woman with like interests. Box 165-A.

YALE GRADUATE desires acquaintance vivacious young lady interested dancing, etc, going "Dutch." Box 166-A.

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WOULD single gentleman under forty, preferably professional, like to make acquaintance of young lady, 25, fond of sports? Box 168-A.

YOUNG lady, 27, fond of theater, modern literature and dancing, desires to meet single professional man, thirty to forty, with like interest and sense of humor. Box 169-A.

The Compleat Collector

RARE BOOKS

CONDUCTED BY JOHN T. WINTERICH

In alternate weeks this Department is devoted to Fine Printing and is conducted by Carl Purington Rollins.

True Love

FOR THE LOVE OF BOOKS. By Paul Jordan-Smith. New York: Oxford University Press. 1934. $2.50.

THIS is the case-book of an enthusiast. Now enthusiasm is not invariably contagious—one man's hobby is often the next man's sleeping potion, or would be if the first man would only go away. But Mr. Jordan-Smith spices his own bibliophilic passion with learning, wit, acumen, human interest, indignation, and a forthright impetuousness.

"For the Love of Books"—the collection of essays is subtitled "The Adventures of an Impecunious Collector," and the author is a little too rough on pecunious collectors—"For the Love of Books," then, is an important and delightful contribution to the cult of bibliophily. The Smiths seem to do this sort of thing effectively, informatively, and entertainingly — consider Harry B. Smith's "First Nights and First Editions," a happy shelfmate to the present volume. Moreover, the Smiths are an independent folk—they scorn to keep up with the Joneses. It is difficult to recall a point where the collecting paths of Harry B. and Paul Jordan cross. This is proper and wholesome. Self-determination is the first canon of the collector.

Paul Jordan-Smith's interests cover a wide range, from Jerome Cardan to Thornton Wilder, Robinson Jeffers, and Willa Cather. He has the skill to make of Cardan, who died in 1576, a vivid re-creation, and thus he fulfils the second canon of the collector—that a collectible book is to be regarded above all else as the sublimation of a personality.

Check-lists of John Tervena (Ernest G. Henham), J. Mills Whitham, Norman Davey, Mary Webb, Ernest Bramah, Caradoc Evans, Charles Whibley, and Arthur Machen (items not included in the Henry Danielson bibliography) give the book a definite reference value.

Birth Notice

For the third time in a few months this department is happy to proclaim the appearance of a Catalogue Number One. The latest first is under the ægis of House of Books, Ltd., 555 Madison Avenue. It is devoted to first editions of modern authors—devoted to them, indeed, with a singularity of purpose rare among cataloguers.

The present cataloguer—there is no particular reason to keep him anonymous, so let him be properly introduced as Louis Henry Cohn—has a flair for the odd, the unusual, the ephemeral. Arnold Bennett's Christmas Books of 1906, 1907, and 1908—"Things That Have Interested Me" and its successors, which are not to be confounded with the regularly issued compilators with slightly altered titles—are not unknown, but they have never before, one believes, appeared in a dealer's catalogue. And Rockwell Kent's "Down with the Gang" (Au Sable Forks, 1930), distributed on Election Day four years ago by its author, who must have missed the Greenland boat, has never been described anywhere. It is no secret that A. J. Cronin's "Hatter's Castle" appeared in 1931, but few outside of the author and a few technical experts know that four years earlier he had written a pamphlet called "Investigations in First-Aid Organization at Collieries in Great Britain." These are businesses that make a catalogue memorable and preservable.

So, too, is the disclosure that there is an issue of H. G. Wells's "The Time Machine" (London, 1895) that makes him "H. S. Wells" on the front cover. It has long been known (at least since the appearance of Geoffrey H. Wells's bibliography in 1925) that the first American edition made a similar error on cover and title-page alike. Captain Cohn's discovery makes it plain why the error occurred on this side and returns the responsibility for it to the country of origin.

Marginalia

A Connecticut collector specializes in the last books of authors who committed suicide. . . . The manuscript of a hitherto unknown play by Lope de Vega has been discovered in the Biblioteca Nacional at Madrid. . . . The theatrical collection of Dr. Eugene P. King has been added to the library of Sock and Buskin, the undergraduate dramatic society of Brown University. . . . An exhibition of the English novel from Chaucer to Conrad is being held at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, and while San Marino is still nearly twelve hours away even to a Rickenbacker, an attractive catalogue summary of the exhibition may be had for ten cents. . . . J. B. Priestley, interviewed at Boston en route to New York and the West Coast, resented the characterization of himself as pudgy but to date has filed no demurrer against this department's allusion a year since to his first and self-suppressed book, "A Chapman of Rhymes" (London, 1918). . . . A hitherto unrecorded pamphlet, "The Petition of the Trustees of the College of the City of New York, to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, Praying to Be Incorporated" (New York, 1754) has been acquired by Columbia University for its Columbiana collection. . . . The New York Historical Society has opened a special exhibit to signalize the two-hundredth anniversary of the imprisonment of John Peter Zenger, German-born proprietor of the *New-York Weekly Journal,* whose subsequent acquittal on a charge of libel marked the birth of a free press in America. . . . Commercial candor in the recent catalogue of a Pennsylvania bookseller who shall be nameless: "Watch future lists for real bargain offers." . . . "The Barretts of Wimpole Street" is a most seeable picture, but why must Norma Shearer, as a lovely Elizabeth Barrett, worship her unseen Robert (in 1846) from an India-paper edition of his poems containing about 900 pages?

Double-Crostics: Number 40

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered (these numbers appear at the beginning of each definition) and you are thereby able to tell how many letters are in the required word. When you have guessed a word each letter is to be written in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

Either before (preferably) or after placing the letters in their squares you should write the words you have guessed on the blank lines which appear to the right in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter. The initial letters of this list of words spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
I. 143-119-175-73-107-71. Florentine painter (1266-1336).	_ _ _ _ _ _
II. 12-50-136-149-153-57-106-82. Inspiration.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
III. 164-75-40-154-36-19-142. Fierce and majestic.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
IV. 87-162-117-21-166-43-126. One who mocks and jeers.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
V. 44-96-146-99-84-51-132. To cajole.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
VI. 103-35-9-111-172-54. Without practical use.	_ _ _ _ _ _
VII. 147-177-105-81-100-49-38. A river in northern Italy.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
VIII. 8-77-160-125-180-65. Suspended animation.	_ _ _ _ _ _
IX. 42-30-55-176-109-95-90. English author (1861-1923).	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
X. 165-59-28-48-33-173-93. Falsetto singer.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
XI. 137-89-110-26-86-181-61. Pertaining to digging.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
XII. 148-123-120-67-159-39-56-138-27. Abrasion, friction.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XIII. 134-72-156-13. Goddess of the rainbow.	_ _ _ _
XIV. 178-115-129-145-7-79-62-18-131-101-45. Since then.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XV. 108-167-127-3-37-46. Bringer of bad luck; Jonah.	_ _ _ _ _ _
XVI. 66-74-97-122-139-151. American story writer.	_ _ _ _ _ _
XVII. 68-116-124-60-155-112. Carlyle's literary executor.	_ _ _ _ _ _
XVIII. 64-29-114-141-170-104-163-121-15. Real, genuine.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XIX. 88-4-118-150-22. Central pillar of winding stairway.	_ _ _ _ _
XX. 20-17-113-161. A Belgian-French river.	_ _ _ _
XXI. 78-25-130-174-152. Spirit, vivacity.	_ _ _ _ _
XXII. 135-76-11-23-157-14. Means for achieving a purpose.	_ _ _ _ _ _
XXIII. 47-52-80-133-179-5-92-83. Country of small men.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXIV. 6-1-168-32-10. Author of "Brand."	_ _ _ _ _
XXV. 98-16-69-140-63-91-171-34-24-41. Political management.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXVI. 169-2-128-58-85-102-158-53-94-70-144-31. Disease (2 words).	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (NUMBER 39)

EMILY BRONTË—"LAST LINES"

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;
  Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,
  To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by Thine infinity.

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The PHŒNIX NEST

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

ROUND ABOUT PARNASSUS

THERE is not much remarkable poetry before me today, but there are a good many volumes deserving brief comment. Again I may say what I have said before: one of the most interesting of the younger American poets for you to look at at the moment is *James Agee*. His "Permit Me Voyage" is published by the Yale University Press. To contrast with this, the best book by an *older* poet for you to purchase is the new edition of *Robert Frost's* "A Boy's Will," his first book at last given fitting format and type by Henry Holt & Company. The book has been redesigned, the text completely reset, and excellent woodcuts by *Thomas W. Nason* have been added. The book is, in fact, now wholly a delight. Another delight to me, who have always enjoyed her work, is "Mountains and Molehills," by *Frances Cornford* (Cambridge, at the University Press). Her inimitable and perfect illustrator is *Gwen Raverat*, whose woodcuts are as beautiful as are Mrs. Cornford's verses. If you buy only the above three books this season you will have acquired more rare beauty than is usual. You can get Mrs. Cornford's book through the Macmillan Company. Read her "Ode on the Whole Duty of Parents," great wisdom concerning parents and children. And if you love English landscape and interiors, Gwen Raverat's woodcuts will refresh your eyes.

Sherry Mangan's "No Apology for Poetry," poems written from 1922 to 1931, and published now by Bruce Humphries in Boston, seems to be the latest book the intelligentsia like; and therefore I am immediately suspicious of it. Sure enough, it is extremely mannered. It evinces the new preciosity. Were this not still little more than the first quarter of the century, I should believe, by the poetry being written, that it was the end. On every hand flourish signs of the *fin de siècle*. Mr. Mangan has a great deal of cleverness and is even amusing at times. He is erudite, world-weary, a hedonist. He controls usually a thin, harpsichord music. He is triflingly erotic and always intellectual. And there seems to me very little life to the whole affair. Not that it matters at all, but most certainly, unless an occasional spewing of modern lingo denotes it, there is nothing here of our extraordinary and as yet unsung epoch. It is the old staleness. I should rather recommend you to "Ten Introductions," a collection of modern verse edited by two intelligent people, *Genevieve Taggard* and *Dudley Fitts*, and published by Arrow Editions: New York. The poems in their book are those of young writers who have not yet been published in book form. Doubtless the name of *Lincoln Kirstein* will be most familiar. This is an inquiry on the part of the editors, with no desire to establish a "new school." The poetry has not taken the top of my head off as, I think, *Emily Dickinson* desired poetry to do. It seems to me that the newest poetry becomes more and more like a jerky prose. Rhythm is apparently vulgar. Also, in an age that protests so much about revolution it is peculiar that the younger poets go in for a sort of frozen aloofness. In the old days when we were brash, and wrote verse with swing and color, we were, at least, more in the thick of life (and not afraid of it) than a lot of these highly cultivated youngsters.

The public prints have unfortunately found the fact that *Edith Kingdon Gould* has tried to write poetry, material for illustrated interviews. Miss Gould is still a young girl, and her poetry is pretty bad. But she is the daughter of a great deal of money and therefore, for the sake of the proletariat, who eat it up, she must be asked serious questions and seriously photographed. The press doubtless knows what people want to read about. Miss Gould seems a talented child; her initial poems no better and no worse than those of many children. *Mrs. Wagstaff* writes her a fulsome introduction and William H. Sadlier, Inc., of New York and Chicago, publishes her little book.

In reply to an inquiry as to whether *Joseph Lewis French* has compiled any anthologies of verse, I know of at least one which has recently been reissued by the Liveright Publishing Corporation. It is "Lotus and Chrysanthemum: An Anthology of Chinese and Japanese Poetry," with symbolic drawings by *Samuel Bernard Schaeffer*. It contains some very good translations.

Mary Britton Miller's "Intrepid Bird" (Macmillan) shows decided facility and is rather better than the average; but for the most part both thought and manner of execution seem to me hardly to escape the commonplace. "A Tearless Glass," poems and a preface, by *Louis Grudin* (Covici-Friede) is more interesting. Mr. Grudin is very articulate and talks for twenty-two pages about causal symbolism, poetry and verbal living, the notion of cause, logic and poetry, etc. Somehow it seems to me that the more one has to explain about anything in art the more suspect it is. When I encounter them, I expect to find Mr. Grudin's own poems cryptic and heavily-mannered; and that is precisely how I find them. Whereas at one time the Imagists insisted on the image, nowadays it seems, in pursuit of *Hart Crane*, the insistence is upon the disintegration of the image so that each separate shard, perhaps (anyway, this is no more nonsense than the others talk) may sparkle with a separate light. I have shown before this how easy it is to write such stuff as

Your gaslight mind
Darts into society, making motions
Like the stab
Of a fang in your dark,
Yet not too quick to be seen, etc., etc.

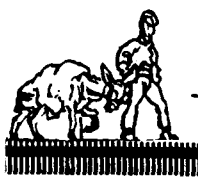
This is the higher nonsense, except that it has little relation to the intelligence. Anyone can write such disconnected bosh and pretend to give it a subtle concealed reference; for it is impossible to prove that it has no such reference, just as it is impossible to prove that it has. "Awoke in the verminous night. The lice of his heart Could not be seen and killed." Such references as these are another hall-mark of this sort of poetry, references to dirt and ugliness for no particular reason, where one suspects an affinity. This is not all of Mr. Grudin, but it is a good deal of him. His poems have appeared in all the periodicals that confer the intellectual accolade, *The Little Review, The Dial, The New Republic, Broom, Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, The American Caravan, Pagany,* and *The Symposium*. That is entirely natural. Only their affectedness seems to date a little now. That is one good thing. Time passes swiftly in New York, for attitudinizing as well as for fossilization.

The editor of "Modern Things," *Parker Tyler,* has been suspecting me of shelving his anthology (published by the Galleon Press, 175 Fifth Avenue), because I am too moss-backed. He prefaces his book by a slight dissertation on the flux of modern values, and then starts out with a damned dull "unpoetry" poem by *T. S. Eliot,* called "Triumphal March." This is followed by a rather better poem by same, called "Animula." This is followed by one of *Ezra Pound's* horribly boring cantos. This is followed by some of *E. E. Cummings's* antics. This man is both a poet (though quite mad) and at times funny. That is a lot to be, in this collection! *Marianne Moore* speaks of a swan "with gondoliering legs"—and that is so swell that, as usual, I forgive her for doing other things in which I can't believe. *William Carlos Williams, Gertrude Stein,* and so on, follow. The best newer names are *Raymond Larsson's* and that of *Paul Eaton Reeve*. (But a poem *The Saturday Review of Literature* published of his was better than anything of his here. He has fallen off.) I wouldn't call this anthology important or one that tells me anything new; though it brings home to me a depressing realization of how bored to death most of the moderns must be to bore their earnest readers so.

Life, guts, and gusto; color, music, fire—don't expect them any more, my friends. Flop through a pale world like a waterlily, and if you can't become an Anglo-Catholic or fall asleep over the *disjecta membra* of the classics, go fly a kite—much the better choice!

There is some promise in *Dwight Strickland's* "Islanded," published by the famous Paul Elder in San Francisco. *Pauline Francis Stephens* is rather capable with the sonnet in "Mushrooms" (privately printed), and *Kenneth White's* "October Vigil" is one of the few modern poems that bears the slightest indication of what century we are living in. (Get it at 50 cents from The Cassowary Press, 433 West 21st Street.)

First "AAA" Novel of the New Year!



—DONALD GORDON, American News Company

Here's 1935's first big discovery—simultaneously chosen by the Literary Guild of America and as London *Evening Standard* book-of-the-month for January—a brilliantly readable book of which Carl Van Doren writes: "Not only does this novel abound and bristle with life, but it also creates a setting which may be remembered even after most of the incidents are forgotten...Few readers in an American January will be able to resist the magic of this unknown town in Spain and not at least want to go there."

Delay in the Sun by ANTHONY THORNE

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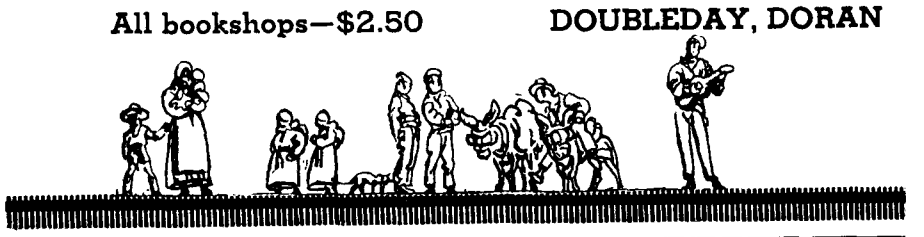

HAPPY NEW YEAR

. . . . and here's hoping that every one of your Gift Subscriptions to *The Saturday Review* will bring the pleasure this one* did.

Dear Sirs:

The Saturday Review *was a Christmas present last year from a dear friend. It turned out to be the nicest gift I ever received. So much have I enjoyed your magazine, I now renew it myself.*

Very truly
A. C.

* We quote from a recent renewal letter received from California.

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